

SIGHT & SOUND

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CONTRIBUTORS

Alfred Hitchcock

Paul Rotha

A. Cavalcanti

John Grierson

Lotte Reiniger

H. Forsyth Hardy

Marie Seton

Felix Rose

Alan Page

Arthur Vesselo

F. J. C. Hearnshaw

J. E. Neale

Noel Carrington

Ernest Dyer

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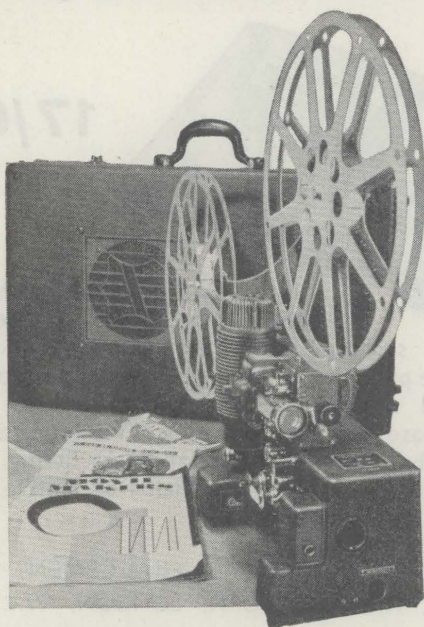
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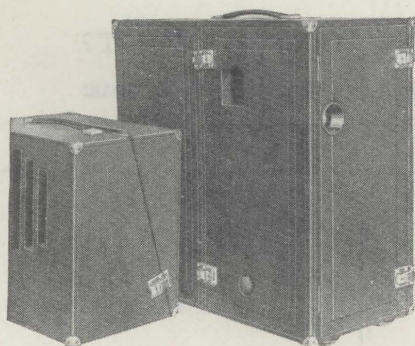
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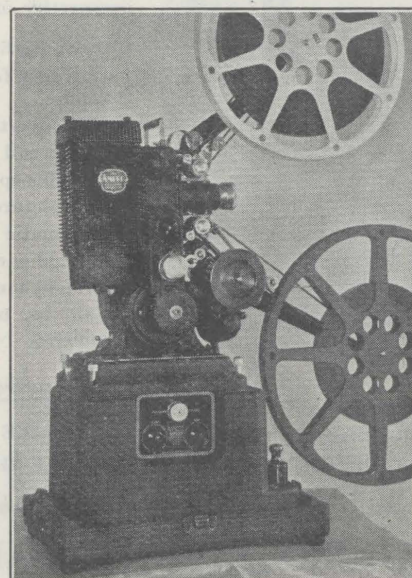
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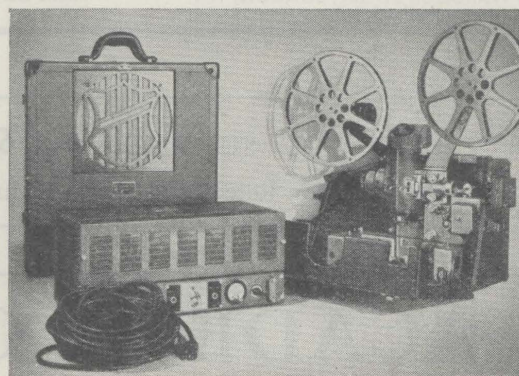
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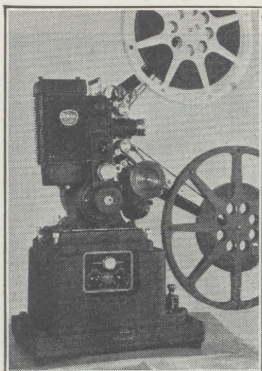
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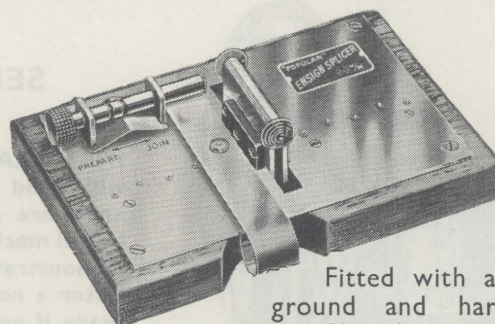
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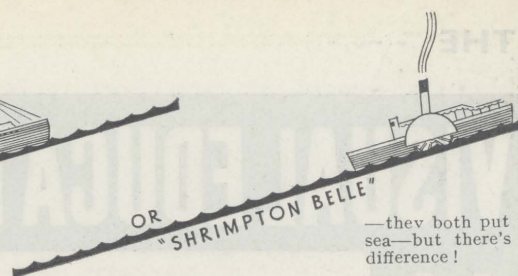
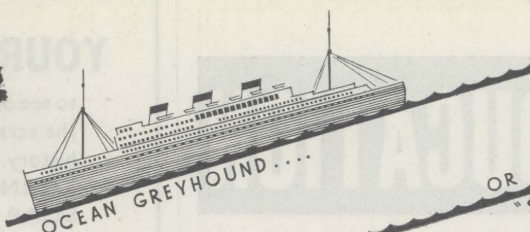
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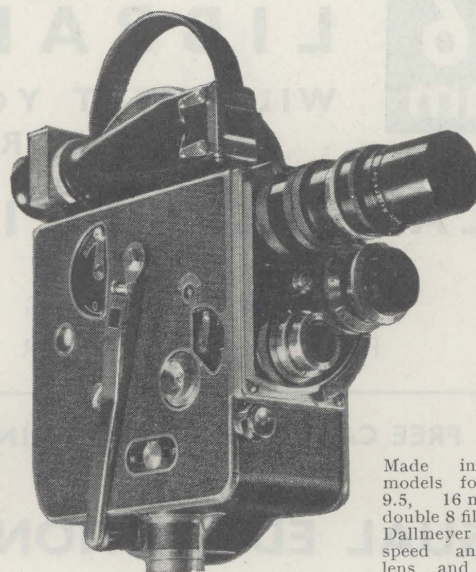
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NEWS OF THE QUARTER

PROPOSED NEW QUOTA LEGISLATION

In a White Paper issued on July 29th the Government outlines its proposals for legislation to succeed the Cinematograph Act, 1927, which expires in 1938. A Bill will be placed before Parliament next session. As the White Paper was issued when SIGHT AND SOUND was already on the press full discussion of it is necessarily held over.

Tentative proposals for new legislation were issued by the Board of Trade on July 11th and were the subject of considerable discussion, the main lines of which are indicated on pages 75 to 77 of this issue.

The outstanding changes contained in the White Paper proposals as compared with the tentative proposals are as follows: (1) Quota for long films to be 15 per cent for renters and 10 per cent for exhibitors for the first year, and 20 per cent and 15 per cent respectively for the second year. (2) Quota to increase by stages over a ten years period to 30 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. (3) Cost test for renters quota for long films to be £1 a foot with a minimum of £7,500 to be expended on labour costs. (4) A film costing £1 a foot, with a minimum of £22,500 expended on labour costs to count at twice its length for renters' quota. Tentative proposals 5-10 are substantially embodied in the White Paper. An additional proposal establishes the reciprocity principle: the acquisition by a renter for not less than £22,000 of the rights for one foreign country of a long film made in Great Britain on which at least £3 a foot with a minimum of £22,500 has been expended to be regarded as equivalent to the acquisition for renting in Great Britain of a British film of the same length. It will be noted that

on a number of points the White Paper proposals meet the suggestions and criticisms outlined elsewhere.

CENSORSHIP

Great Britain.—The film which gave the British Board of Film Censors the greatest anxiety during the year 1936 was *Green Pastures*. Lord Tyrrell, in addressing the C.E.A. Annual Conference, detailed the reasons why he decided to pass the film, and at the same time stated the Board's general attitude to films dealing with religious subjects. On this matter, as on all matters relating to censorship, Lord Tyrrell was satisfied that the Board had its fingers on the pulse of public opinion and had every reason to be satisfied with its work. "The cinema," he said, "is unquestionably the cleanest form of entertainment in this country to-day"; and "the films produced to-day are far less contentious than they were a few years ago and yet they possess, in a general way, far more entertainment value." He referred to the fact that during the year the Board not had received a single complaint from the cinematograph licensing authorities throughout the country.

Out of a total of 761 feature films submitted during the year 1936, 8 films were totally rejected and exception was taken to 391 films; 368 films were given a "U" certificate and 383 were given an "A" certificate. As compared with 1935, these figures show an increase of "A" films from 318 to 381, while the number of "U" films was the same. In addition, two films were certified as "H" under the new category denoting an "horrific" film. It will be remembered that it was in July, 1936, that this classification was applied

to two films by the L.C.C. and by the Middlesex and Surrey County Councils and that children under 16 may not be admitted to cinemas licensed by these Councils when "H" films are being shown. Of 1661 short films examined 29 were given an "A" certificate.

Bengal Board of Censors.—During the year ending March 31st, 1937, the Bengal Board of Censors, according to its Annual Report, certified 235 feature films for public exhibition; of these 73 were Indian, 51 British, and 111 American. Three films dealing with the Irish troubles were refused certificates: from England, *Ourselves Alone*, "the film deals with a revolutionary movement, shows the conflict between the Republican Army and the Black and Tans; contains many objectionable scenes, and a reference to the down-trodden Irish struggling for freedom from the British yoke"; from America, *The Plough and the Stars*, and *The Beloved Enemy* which were rejected for similar reasons. Other well-known films prohibited in Bengal included *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, *Abdul the Damned*, and *Black Fury*. A number of Indian films were also prohibited.

Ontario.—The Ontario Board of Censors "regrets to report that a much greater number of deletions have to be made in British films than in those from other countries." Of the 127 British films submitted during the year (ending March 31st, 1937) cuts were made in 31. The Board suggests that British producers have not had the years of experience behind those in the United States during which they have learnt that 'clean films pay best.' The Board also notes "a strange paradox—the best 'British' films (*i.e.*, films dealing with British history and literature) are 'American made.'" While it notes with satisfaction a considerable improvement in moral standards generally, the Board is disturbed by propagandist films being imported from Europe. "Various sociological doctrines, which certain European countries appear desirous of imposing on the whole of mankind, are defended or glorified in films imported from those countries. All of these doctrines are completely alien to British and Canadian ideals. The Board therefore expunges sequences that it considers objectionable for this reason. Newsreels taken on this continent or in Europe sometimes show a decided political partisanship or partiality towards one of a number of groups involved in a dispute. The Board feels that this comes under the heading of propaganda, and accordingly requires the alteration of such newsreels so as to give all contending factions an equitable proportion of footage or none at all. Up to date, no films made on this continent or in Great Britain appear to be inspired by proponents of any cult or 'ism.' . . . A type of film that has become increasingly common during the last few years and could be readily adopted to propaganda purposes is the 'topical' film—one taking some recent event of importance as a background. A few weeks after a great disaster, a spectacular crime or any other sensational occurrence, films built round such an event are inevitably submitted to the Board. It is essential to exercise great care in releasing these films, as characters in them may be identified as public personages and the subject may be dealt with in such a way as to rouse audiences' sympathy with some faction."

COMMITTEE ON CINEMATOGRAPH ACT, 1909

In the House of Commons on June 3rd, the Home Secretary announced the constitution of the committee which is to be set up by the Home Office and the Scottish

Office to consider the administration of the Cinematograph Act, 1909. The committee will consist of three representatives of the London County Council, four representatives of the Association of Municipal Corporations, four representatives of Scottish Local Government Associations, two representatives of Justices, one representative each of the Home Office and the Scottish Office, and two or three representatives of the general public, together with an independent Chairman appointed jointly by the Home Office and the Scottish Office.

It is in virtue of the Cinematograph Act, 1909, that local licensing authorities issue licenses to public cinemas, one condition of which throughout England, but not at present in Scotland, is that cinemas so licensed shall only show films passed by the British Board of Film Censors or by the local licensing authority itself. It will be remembered also that the Act states that licenses must be obtained by all premises in which inflammable films are used but that the Act contains no definition of "inflammable." It is in consequence of this that regulations governing the use of so-called "non-flam" or slow-burning film differ in different parts of the country.

CERTIFICATION OF EDUCATIONAL FILMS

Seventy films have been certified by the Board of Education under the arrangements for exempting educational films from customs duties, since January. Of these, 62 were certified for export from this country to countries within the British Empire, two were certified for importation from Australia, three were certified for importation from Italy, and three were certified for exemption from import duties as being educational films produced by persons established in this country. The British Film Institute has also examined a number of British films on behalf of the International Institute of Educational Cinematography and international certificates under the Geneva Convention have been granted on the basis of the Institute's advice.

The Board of Education announces one addition and some amendments to the statement relating to the exemption of educational films from customs duty which was published in the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND. South Africa has now now declared its readiness to exempt certified British educational films from customs duty. The Irish Free State was erroneously listed as being willing to allow customs free importation of certified British educational films. The Irish Free State, U.S.S.R., Bulgaria, Cuba, Iraq and Iran were erroneously listed as having ratified the Geneva Convention; at present they have only signed it.

B.F.I. AND QUOTA FOR SHORTS

A resolution relating to the Moyne Committee's proposal of a separate quota for short films was sent by the British Film Institute to the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Board of Education. The Governors of the Institute expressed their opinion that the production of British documentary and British educational films, both of which have a world-wide reputation, would be stimulated and encouraged by the establishment of a separate quota for short films on the lines recommended by the Moyne Committee.

B.F.I. CONSTITUTION CHANGES

A resolution, making important changes in the Articles of Association of the British Film Institute, was passed at a special General Meeting held on 6th July, 1937. The changes, which were proposed in the light of experience gained

during the Institute's four years' work, were placed before the meeting with the full knowledge and consent of the Privy Council, from whom the Institute has each year received the major part of its income, and of the Board of Trade.

The changes, which are now operative, affect the Governing Board of the Institute, which consists of nine Governors and a chairman, who is elected by them. Three Governors represent the film industry and are nominated by the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, the Kinematograph Renters' Society, and the Film Producers Group of the Federation of British Industries. Three Governors represent educational interests and are nominated by the Royal Society of Teachers, the British Institute of Adult Education, and the Association of Education Committees. The remaining three Governors representing "public interests" have, in the past, been elected by the members of the Institute at the Annual General Meeting. In future these three Governors will be nominated by the Home Office, the Board of Trade and the Scottish Office. The election of the Chairman of the Governing Board must now be approved by the Privy Council before he is confirmed in his office. All the Governors, including the Chairman, will in future be nominated for three years only and one member of each group will retire each year. Retiring Governors are eligible for re-nomination. Finally it is now laid down that no Governor, except those representing the film industry, shall have any financial interest in the production, distribution or exhibition of cinematograph films or apparatus.

LIBRARIES AND THE CINEMA

In a paper given to the annual conference of the Library Association, Mr. M. C. Pottinger, Librarian to the Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Hon. Secretary of the Tyneside Film Society, suggested that public libraries should make it their business to promote informed criticism of and an intelligent approach to films. He suggested that every library should have a good selection of books on the cinema, and should collate intelligent and honest criticisms of films so that they should be readily consulted as the films are shown throughout the country. Libraries could also take advantage of the local showings of films based on books to stimulate the circulation of the original books although, Mr. Pottinger thought, that in most cases the books were already sufficiently popular. A more interesting idea which he suggested was that at the end of films like *Night Mail*, *Song of Ceylon*, and *Enough to Eat* made by people who, like the public libraries, "are largely concerned with disseminating knowledge which will make the community conscious of the responsibilities of citizenship," there should appear a short list of books bearing on the subject of the film. Finally, Mr. Pottinger looked forward to the day when every library will be equipped with its own projection apparatus.

B.B.C. FILM TALKS

During the summer months, the B.B.C. film talks will be given by six different speakers. Listeners have been invited to assist the B.B.C. in discovering what listeners think of these talks by undertaking to listen and report on them. A larger number of listeners volunteered than the B.B.C. required, and representative listeners in all parts of the country have now been selected. The first talk was given on Sunday, July 18th, at 6 o'clock, by Robert Herring, editor of *Life and Letters*. Subsequent talks at fortnightly intervals at the same time will be given by Henry Turner,

F. Andrew Rice, Graham Greene, William Farr and C. A. Lejeune.

ODEON THEATRES

In 1933, Mr. Oscar Deutsch owned one cinema in Perry Bar, Birmingham. To-day Odeon Theatres Ltd. own or control over 220 cinemas and have another 35 in the course of construction. In June of this year they acquired a controlling interest in London and Southern Super Cinemas Ltd., and in County Cinemas Ltd., bringing in an additional 70 theatres. At the beginning of July, Odeon Theatres became a public company with a share capital of £6,000,000, of which £1,800,000 debenture shares were offered to the public and were oversubscribed within five minutes of the opening of the list. Mr. Oscar Deutsch, who founded Odeon Theatres, is Managing Director of the new company. The other directors are Mr. Stanley Bates, Mr. W. G. Elcock (Directors of the original company), the Hon. Peter Aitken, Mr. G. Archibald and Mr. Maurice Silverstone (Directors of United Artists Corporation), Mr. S. A. Bennett and Mr. E. C. Simmons. In the autumn, the Odeon Theatre, Leicester Square, built on the site of the Alhambra, will be opened and will act as a shop window for films distributed by United Artists. It is also announced that arrangements have been made whereby United Artists films shown at this theatre will be released throughout the country in all Odeon Theatres without the long interval that there is at present between the showing of a film in London and the date on which the public outside London are able to see it.

JOHN GRIERSON

On June 30th Mr. John Grierson relinquished the position of Director of the G.P.O. Film Unit which he had held since 1935. Before this he had been director of the Film Unit of the Empire Marketing Board which he joined in 1927. When the Board was dissolved the Film Unit was transferred to the G.P.O. and continued the type of work for which the Unit had already obtained a reputation throughout the world. During these ten years the Unit produced some 150 films including *Drifters*, the first film directed by Grierson himself, which was an immediate box-office success and is still issued to schools, together with many other E.M.B. films, from the Empire Film Library, and, the most recent in a long list of outstanding films, *Night Mail*, and *We Live in Two Worlds*. But more important than individual films have been the development, under Grierson's leadership, of the documentary film—one of the distinctive contributions to cinema made by this country—and the achievements of the group of film makers, including Elton, Wright, Rotha, Legg, Shaw and Taylor, who received their training and inspiration working with him. Mention must also be made of the experiments in colour films carried out at the Unit by Len Lye, resulting in *Colour Box* and *Rainbow Dance*, and of the contribution to education made by the travelling projection units which have taken G.P.O. Films to schools and educational institutions throughout the country. It is to be hoped that the formation of Film Centre, with Grierson and Elton as directors, marks the beginning of a new chapter in the development of the documentary film and the extension of Grierson's activities into even wider fields.

Mr. J. B. Holmes has been appointed Director of Productions at the G.P.O. Film Unit. Among the films which he has directed have been *Mediaeval Village*, *The Mine* and some of the physical education films, for G.B. Instructional, and most recently *The Way to the Sea*, for Strand Films.

FILMS FOR CHILDREN

THE PUBLICATION by the British Film Institute of its first list of entertainment films recommended for children's programmes, prepared as an outcome of the Conference of November, 1936, has met with immediate and widespread welcome. Six thousand copies of the list were sent out on July 9 to every cinema licensing authority, to every national organisation of parents, teachers, churches, and social workers and, thanks to the assistance of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, to every cinema exhibitor. Two thousand copies have already been sold, to individuals and, in quantities ranging from twenty to two hundred, to organisations. News space was given to the list in almost every national and provincial newspaper, as well as in educational and social papers, and comments and editorial articles were published by many of them.

The list contains titles of eighty feature films which are available for special performances arranged under the headings, Comedies, Stories and Westerns. These films are free from incidents likely to frighten or disturb children and contain a good, clear story, plenty of action, and the kind of humour which is appreciated by children. There follows a selection of short films: Comedies (with Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy, Buster Keaton and *Our Gang*), Cartoons (with some advice on the necessity for careful selection of these), and, for want of a better name, Interest Films. Only a selection of these is given to indicate the variety available and, in order to show how balanced programmes might be made up, they are grouped under the headings, Round About Britain, How People Live in Other Lands, How the World's Work is Done, Birds, Beasts and Fishes, and Games and How to Play Them. Finally, there is a further list of thirty feature films which are not yet available for single special performances but which could be used by cinemas which had already booked them for their ordinary performances.

The List was prepared in order to assist cinema exhibitors who already run children's performances and to provide a basis for co-operation between cinema exhibitors and educational, social and parents' organisations. At the November Conference Mr. Simon Rowson estimated that out of some 4,500 cinemas only 500 ran children's performances and that these were attended by about 600,000 children a week. There are about 6,000,000 children between the ages of 5 and 14 attending elementary schools in Great Britain. A largely increased number of regular children's programmes is desirable. There are sufficient films available; the potential audience exists. What is lacking is co-operation between the local cinemas and the local public organisations.

On a card sent by the British Film Institute to all cinemas, in an attempt to establish how many of them run

children's performances, how they are run, and with what success, the last question is, "Do you receive any active support from local churches, schools, etc.?" Most of the replies to this question range from a plain and often emphatic "No" to bitter protests against the attitude adopted by some local bodies: against their refusal even to consider giving assistance or against ignorance and prejudice which make co-operation impossible. At the same time most of the cinemas would welcome the advice and assistance which these bodies could give them; not because they want to make money out of children's performances—this is almost impossible and many children's performances are run at a financial loss—but because they want to give the children the best entertainment they can. On the basis of the List now published, which will be regularly supplemented, co-operation should be possible. Cinema exhibitors could ask and legitimately expect to receive support for performances at which these films were shown; education authorities, teachers, churches and parents could give it without any misgivings.

A large increase in the number of children's performances would make possible developments outlined by Mr. Sidney Bernstein and Mr. K. A. Nyman at the November Conference and since then urged by many others—developments which would increase the supply of films, improve the quality of the programmes and, in turn, lead to more children's performances. It has been suggested, for example, that a Central Children's Film Library should be established, where copies of suitable films could be placed after their ordinary commercial life is finished and from which exhibitors could book complete programmes of films. Such an organisation would relieve individual film renters of work and storage problems, facilitate bookings, and ensure that the really good films for children, are kept available, like children's books and plays. Again, there are a number of films at present bearing an "A" certificate which with small cuts would be first-class entertainment for children. A Central Library would be able, given the assistance of the renters, to undertake this work. But the first step must be the creation of a larger demand than at present exists.

Given whole-hearted support and only a little effort from all those concerned with the happiness of children significant progress could be made. It is along the lines indicated by the November Conference and this list of films that effort can most profitably be directed. "It is not enough," said Mr. S. W. Harris, Assistant Under Secretary of State to the Home Office, at the November Conference, "to say that children are being protected from undesirable films. We want to see them provided with stimulating and enjoyable recreation. The films of to-morrow will largely depend on the taste of the children to-day."

MY OWN



METHODS

By ALFRED HITCHCOCK ; an abridged version of the article on film direction from
Footnotes to the Film published by Lovat Dickson and reviewed in this issue

MANY PEOPLE think a film director does all his work in the studio, drilling the actors, making them do what he wants. That is not at all true of my own methods, and I can write only of my own methods. I like to have a film complete in my mind before I go on the floor. Sometimes the first idea one has of a film is of a vague pattern, a sort of haze with a certain shape. There is possibly a colourful opening developing into something more intimate; then, perhaps in the middle, a progression to a chase or some other adventure; and sometimes at the end the big shape of a climax, or maybe some twist or surprise. You see this hazy pattern, and then you have to find a narrative idea to suit it. Or a story may give you an idea first and you have to develop it into a pattern.

Imagine an example of a standard plot—let us say a conflict between love and duty. This idea was the origin of my first talkie, *Blackmail*. The hazy pattern one saw beforehand was duty—love—love versus duty—and finally either duty or love, one or the other. The whole middle section was built up on the theme of love versus duty, after duty and love had been introduced separately in turn. So I had first to put on the screen an episode expressing duty.

I showed the arrest of a criminal by Scotland Yard detectives, and tried to make it as concrete and detailed as I could. You even saw the detectives take the man to the lavatory to wash his hands—nothing exciting, just the routine of duty. Then the young detective says he's going out that evening with his girl, and the sequence ends, pointing on from duty to love. Then you start showing the relationship between the detective and his girl: they are middle-class people. The love theme doesn't run smoothly; there is a quarrel and the girl goes off by herself, just because the young man has kept her waiting a few minutes. So your story starts; the girl falls in with the villain—he tries to seduce her and she kills him. Now you've got your problem prepared. Next morning, as soon as the detective is put on to the murder case, you have your conflict—love versus duty. The audience know that he will be trying to track down his own girl, who has done the murder, so you sustain their interest: they wonder what will happen next.

The blackmailer was really a subsidiary theme. I wanted him to go through and expose the girl. That was my idea of how the story ought to end. I wanted the pursuit to be

after the girl, not after the blackmailer. That would have brought the conflict on to a climax, with the young detective, ahead of the others, trying to push the girl out through a window to get her away, and the girl turning round and saying: "You can't do that—I must give myself up." Then the rest of the police arrive, misinterpret what he is doing, and say, "Good man, you've got her," not knowing the relationship between them. Now the reason for the opening comes to light. You repeat every shot used first to illustrate the duty theme, only now it is the girl who is the criminal. The young man is there ostensibly as a detective, but of course the audience know he is in love with the girl. The girl is locked up in her cell and the two detectives walk away, and the older one says, "Going out with your girl to-night?" The younger one shakes his head. "No. Not to-night."

That was the ending I wanted for *Blackmail*, but I had to change it for commercial reasons. The girl couldn't be left to face her fate. And that shows you how the films suffer from their own power of appealing to millions. They could often be subtler than they are, but their own popularity won't let them.

But to get back to the early work on a film. With the help of my wife, who does the technical continuity, I plan out a script very carefully, hoping to follow it exactly, all the way through, when shooting starts. In fact, this working on the script is the real making of the film, for me. When I've done it, the film is finished already in my mind. Usually, too, I don't find it necessary to do more than supervise the editing myself.

Settings, of course, come into the preliminary plan, and usually I have fairly clear ideas about them; I was an art student before I took up with films. Sometimes I even think of backgrounds first. *The Man Who Knew Too Much* started like that; I looked in my mind's eye at snowy Alps and dingy London alleys, and threw my characters into the middle of the contrast. Studio settings, however, are often a problem; one difficulty is that extreme effects—extremes of luxury or extremes of squalor—are much the easiest to register on the screen. If you try to reproduce the average sitting-room in Golders Green or Streatham it is apt to come out looking like nothing in particular, just non-descript. It is true that I have tried lately to get interiors giving a real lower-middle-class atmosphere—for instance,

the Verlocs' living room in *Sabotage*—but there's always a certain risk in giving your audience humdrum truth.

However, in time the script and the sets are finished somehow and we are ready to start shooting. One great problem that occurs at once, and keeps on occurring, is to get the players to adapt themselves to film technique. Many of them, of course, come from the stage; they are not cinema-minded at all. So, quite naturally, they like to play long scenes straight ahead. But if I have to shoot a long scene continuously I always feel I am losing grip on it, from a cinematic point of view. The camera, I feel is simply standing there, *hoping* to catch something with a visual point to it. I want to put my film together on the screen, not simply to photograph something that has been put together already in the form of a long piece of stage acting. This is what gives an effect of life to a picture—the feeling that when you see it on the screen you are watching something that has been conceived and brought to birth directly in visual terms.

You can see an example of what I mean in *Sabotage*. Just before Verloc is killed there is a scene made up entirely of short pieces of film, separately photographed. This scene has to show how Verloc comes to be killed—how the thought of killing him arises in Sylvia Sidney's mind and connects itself with the carving knife she uses when they sit down to dinner. But the sympathy of the audience has to be kept with Sylvia Sidney; it must be clear that Verloc's death, finally, is an accident. So, as she serves at the table, you see her unconsciously serving vegetables with the carving knife, as though her hand were keeping hold of the knife of its own accord. The camera cuts from her hand to her eyes and back to her hand; then back to her eyes as she suddenly becomes aware of the knife making its error. Then to a normal shot—the man unconcernedly eating; then back to the hand holding the knife. In an older style of acting Sylvia would have had to show the audience what was passing in her mind by exaggerated facial expression. But people to-day in real life often don't show their feelings in their faces: so the film treatment showed the audience her mind through her hand, through its unconscious grasp on the knife. Now the camera moves again to Verloc—back to the knife—back again to his face. You see him seeing the knife, realising its implication. The tension between the two is built up with the knife as its focus.

GETTING THE AUDIENCE INTO THE PICTURE

Now when the camera has immersed the audience so closely in a scene such as this, it can't instantly become objective again. It must broaden the movement of the scene without loosening the tension. Verloc gets up and walks round the table, coming so close to the camera that you feel, if you are sitting in the audience, almost as though you must move back to make room for him. Then the camera moves to Sylvia Sidney again, then returns to the subject—the knife.

So you gradually build up the psychological situation, piece by piece, using the camera to emphasise first one detail, then another. The point is to draw the audience right inside the situation instead of leaving them to watch it from outside, from a distance. And you can do this only by breaking the action up into details and cutting from one to the other, so that each detail is forced in turn on the attention of the audience and reveals its psychological meaning. If you played the whole scene straight through, and simply made a photographic record of it with the camera always

in one position, you would lose your power over the audience. They would watch the scene without becoming really involved in it, and you would have no means of concentrating their attention on those particular visual details which make them feel what the characters are feeling.

One way of using the camera to give emphasis is the reaction shot. By the reaction shot I mean any close-up which illustrates an event by showing instantly the reaction to it of a person or a group. The door opens for someone to come in, and before showing who it is you cut to the expressions of the persons already in the room. Or, while one person is talking, you keep your camera on someone else who is listening. This over-running of one person's image with another person's voice is a method peculiar to the talkies; it is one of the devices which help the talkies to tell a story faster than a silent film could tell it, and faster than it could be told on the stage.

Or, again, you can use the camera to give emphasis whenever the attention of the audience has to be focused for a moment on a certain player. There is no need for him to raise his voice or move to the centre of the stage or do anything dramatic. A close-up will do it all for him—will give him, so to speak, the stage all to himself.

I must say that in recent years I have come to make much less use of obvious camera devices. I have become more commercially-minded; afraid that anything at all subtle may be missed. I have learnt from experience how easily small touches are overlooked.

The film always has to deal in exaggerations. Its methods reflect the simple contrasts of black and white photography. One advantage of colour is that it would give you more intermediate shades. I should never want to fill the screen with colour: it ought to be used economically—to put new words into the screen's visual language when there's a need for them. You could start a colour film with a board-room scene: sombre panelling and furniture, the directors all in dark clothes and white collars. Then the chairman's wife comes in, wearing a red hat. She takes the attention of the audience at once, just because of that one note of colour.

A journalist once asked me about distorted sound—a device I tried in *Blackmail* when the word "knife" hammers on the consciousness of the girl at breakfast on the morning after the murder. Again, I think this kind of effect may be justified. There have always been occasions when we have needed to show a phantasmagoria of the mind in terms of visual imagery. So we may want to show someone's mental state by letting him listen to some sound—let us say church bells—and making them clang with distorted insistence in his head. But on the whole nowadays I try to tell a story in the simplest possible way, so that I can feel sure it will hold the attention of any audience and won't puzzle them.

I know there are critics who ask why lately I have made only thrillers. Am I satisfied, they say, with putting on the screen the equivalent merely of popular novelettes? Part of the answer is that I am out to get the best stories I can which will suit the film medium, and I have usually found it necessary to take a hand in writing them myself. There is a shortage of good writing for the screen. In this country we can't usually afford to employ large writing staffs, so I have had to join in and become a writer myself. I choose crime stories because that is the kind of story I can write, or help to write, myself—the kind of story I can turn most easily into a successful film. It is the same with Charles Bennett,



On the set for *Sabotage*; Hitchcock is standing in left-hand foreground

Gaumont British

who has so often worked with me; he is essentially a writer of melodrama. I am ready to use other stories, but I can't find writers who will give them to me in a suitable form.

Sometimes I have been asked what films I should make if I were free to do exactly as I liked without having to think about the box-office. There are several examples I can give very easily. For one thing, I should like to make travel films with a personal element in them. Or I should like to do a verbatim of a celebrated trial. The Thompson-Bywaters case, for instance. The cinema could reconstruct the whole story. Or there is the fire at sea possibility—that has never been tackled seriously on the screen. It might be too terrifying for some audiences, but it would make a great subject worth while.

British producers are often urged to make more films about characteristic phases of English life.

Why, they are asked, do we see so little of the English farmer or the English seaman? Or is there not plenty of good material in the great British industries—in mining or ship-building or steel? One difficulty here is that English audiences seem to take more interest in American life—I suppose because it has a novelty value. They are rather easily bored by everyday scenes in their own country. But I certainly should like to make a film of the Derby, only it might not be quite in the popular class. It would be hard to invent a Derby story that wasn't hackneyed, conventional. I would rather do it more as a documentary—a sort of pageant, an animated modern version of Frith's "Derby Day." I would show everything that goes on all round the course, but without a story.

Perhaps the average audience isn't ready for that, yet.

Popular taste, all the same, does move; to-day you can put over scenes that would have been ruled out a few years ago. Particularly towards comedy, nowadays, there is a different attitude. You can get comedy out of your stars, and you used not to be allowed to do anything which might knock the glamour off them.

In 1926 I made a film called *Downhill*, from a play by Ivor Novello, who acted in the film himself, with Ian Hunter and Isabel Jeans. There was a sequence showing a quarrel between Hunter and Novello. It started as an ordinary fight; then they began throwing things at one another. They tried to pick up heavy pedestals to throw and the pedestals bowled them over. In other words I made it comic. I even put Hunter into a morning coat and striped trousers because I felt that a man never looks so ridiculous as when he is well dressed and fighting. This whole scene was cut out; they said I was guying Ivor Novello. It was ten years before its time.

I think public taste is turning to like comedy and drama more mixed up; and this is another move away from the conventions of the stage. In a play your divisions are much more rigid; you have a scene in one key—then curtain, and after an interval another scene starts. In a film you keep your whole action flowing; you can have comedy and drama running together and weave them in and out. Audiences are much readier now than they used to be for sudden changes of mood; and this means more freedom for a director. The art of directing for the commercial market is to know just how far you can go. In many ways I am freer now to do what I want to do than I was a few years ago. I hope in time to have more freedom still—if audiences will give it to me.

THE BRITISH CINEMA 1907-1914

The second of a series of articles by MARIE SETON on the history of the British film industry. Film stars and famous stage actors; English history and Shakespeare's plays, popular science and advertisement films, all appeared on the screen during this period.

UP TO 1907, the cinema was a doubtful industry in which people hesitated to say they were employed. It was without traditions, both on the business and technical side, and was something in the nature of a family concern where anyone did any job and hoped for the best. Because production required inventiveness as well as technical ability, it appealed to the imaginative craftsman, and the most successful people on the production side were those with the ingenuity of cheap-jacks, for they made something out of very little. On the business side it required the courage to try anything and everything.

Probably the first specially built picture palace in England was the venture of an American, Harold Gunn, who opened one in Leeds during 1906; but he "kept it so much under his hat" that it failed in a short time. December of the same year saw the opening of the pioneer theatre in London; it was in Bishopsgate Street, and was owned by Col. A. C. Bromhead. Within the next two years, picture theatres multiplied with great rapidity. Many circuits appeared, one, the Electric Theatres Ltd., had as many as twenty-five theatres operating by 1908. This establishing of permanent places for cinema performances coincided with efforts on the part of the distributors to curtail the abuses which were undermining their trade.

THE GROWTH OF THE RENTING BUSINESS

As might be expected, the buying and selling of films was a somewhat irregular business for the first ten years; copies of films were sent on approval, and, if approved, were bought outright. The first abuse with which the distributors had to deal was that fairground showmen, moving continually from place to place, often projected the films sent to them on approval and then returned them as unsuitable; the employment of travellers was instituted to combat this. Then showmen of all classes formed a loaning system amongst themselves, whereby they let out baskets of used films for a few shillings. Other showmen had the habit of buying one or two copies of a picture and then taking dupes which they distributed to a large circuit of music-halls. Colonel Bromhead, Gaumont's representative and a victim of these abuses, was one of the first people to consider the possibility of officially renting films. His scheme was to make up a programme and charge 30s per thousand feet for the first run. In order that this scheme, which was opposed by many people, could be efficiently operated, he opened a number of branch offices throughout England. But one of the most important stages in the development of the British renting business is marked by the film of the Johnson-Burns fight promoted in Australia by Hugh D. McIntosh. Early in 1909, Gaumont secured the film on a percentage basis contract of 97½ per cent to McIntosh and 2½ per cent to Gaumont. Because this was a unique picture, it was considered as the first ex-

clusive, and as a result, a booking contract was inaugurated which was afterwards applied to big feature films such as Will G. Barker's *Henry VIII*.

THE STORY-FILM AND THE MAKING OF "STARS"

Cecil Hepworth was the first British producer who realised it was necessary to form permanent or semi-permanent companies of actors if the story-film was to be elaborated. His policy was to build up the reputations of young and unknown actors and actresses; but, unlike the later publicising of "stars," Hepworth believed that the mystery and attraction of the screen actor could only be preserved if they never appeared in public. His two first leading ladies were Unity Moore, the dancer, and Chrissie White, whose screen career began at the age of eleven. They were both popularised in a series of pictures, *Tilley the Tomboy*. The next "star" to be made was Alma Taylor, who, in 1914, was voted the most popular actress in the world in a "fan" competition.

In 1907 young actors considered the cinema to be a wind-fall for the minimum pay was 3s. 6d. a day (Hepworth paid his extras 4s.), and it was regular work so long as the rain kept off. One of Hepworth's directors, Lewin Fitzhamon, always gave a little extra to anyone who thought of something original to do. In those days, film-making was an adventurous game, for there were no "stand-ins" to do the stunts. Moreover, in those days an actor had to rely on his own personality, for there was neither artificial lighting nor grooming to disguise the blemishes of the "stars."

THE SPECTACULAR FILMS OF WILL G. BARKER

Will G. Barker also formed a stock company of film actors at Acton, and one of the first big films (a five reel picture was then equivalent to seven) he made with them was *East Lynne*. This was followed by a number of spectacular historical pictures, which, owing to Barker's business-like methods of work, were produced very quickly and at a minimum cost. The details are interesting. Hours of work were from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. A conference was then held to arrange an exact schedule for the following day. Only scenes to be shot in sets which were already complete down to the last nail were scheduled. (The sets were built inside one another like Chinese boxes. The decorations—Barker paid great attention to avoiding anachronisms—were composed of curtains, a few period chairs and pillars on castors which were moved from scene to scene. This was the setting in which *Hamlet* was produced in one day in twenty-two scenes!) Barker then left for his London office, and from there he went to his private office,—the Café Monico—where he remained until closing-time in order that he could be found by anyone who had a suggestion to make. On Friday nights a "coroner's inquest" was held on the work done, and to be done. He allowed no "private lives" to intrude into the studio.



Chrissie White, film star, aged 12 *Courtesy Miss Chrissie White*

The three most important films made before 1914 by the Barker Motion Photography Company were *Henry VIII* in which Sir Herbert Tree played Wolsey and was paid £1,000 for a single day's work; *Sixty Years a Queen*, the public life of Queen Victoria, which avoided all living personages except George V as a little boy; and the third was *Jane Shore*, completed four days after the declaration of War.

Jane Shore is the most ambitious film ever made in England; even Korda has not surpassed it. Barker employed 25,000 extras in it, and for the battle sequence he leased the Devil's Dyke, which was then private property, for three days. He bought up the public-houses and prohibited the sale of drink before transporting five thousand people from London. In order that no damage should be done to the Dyke, Barker says he applied first to the Brighton and then to the County police to supply him with five policemen and a sergeant, but both police stations refused as they did not consider film-making was any concern of the criminal authorities. Believing that the sight of a policeman's uniform would intimidate the extras into behaving themselves, he dressed twelve actors up in uniforms hired from Clarkson's, and there was not a single person who noticed that every one of the uniforms was slightly different.

In order to direct the "battle," Barker had five under producers (the designation director was not yet in use), each of whom rehearsed ten group leaders three times. These leaders, fifty in all, were scattered amongst the extras at points marked out on the Dyke with flags. When the scene was shot they received their directions from Barker by means of flags. For further sequences, Barker had a

number of fourteenth-century ships constructed in Shoreham Harbour, and when he came to move them after the outbreak of war he met with the greatest difficulties on account of their warlike character. The question was: was Will G. Barker going to invade someone!

WELL-KNOWN ACTORS COME INTO THE CINEMA

At first, successful stage actors looked with contempt upon the films; film-acting was not an Art. But as soon as Sir Herbert Tree had broken the ice, many leading actors followed his example, choosing to transfer their successful stage performances on to the screen. Thus film versions of well-known plays became popular. There was Sir Charles Wyndham's *David Garrick*, Sir Charles Hawtrey's most successful play, *A Message from Mars*; and finally Hepworth directed a film version of Sir Johnson Forbes-Robertson's last appearance on the stage—as Hamlet in 1913. Hepworth also sponsored, about the same time, five pictures based on the novels of Dickens, which were directed by Thomas Bentley who is still working in British films.

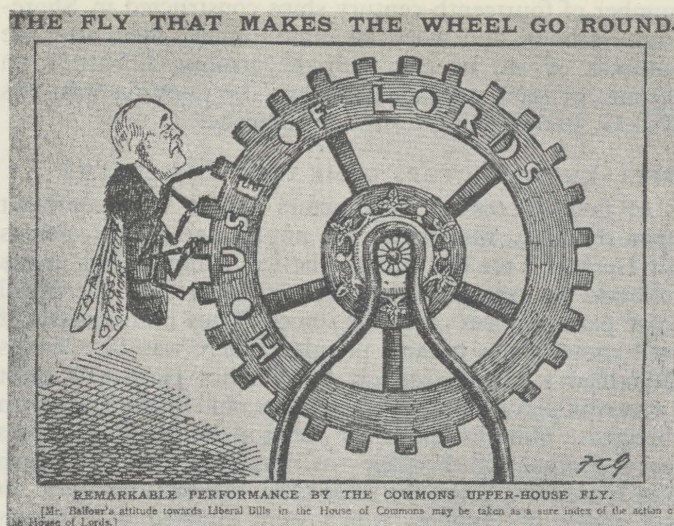
But side by side with this extension of the cinema along the commercial and entertainment lines there was another and very active aspect of film production: this was the film which had something to teach.

EDUCATIONAL CINEMA

It is incorrect to suppose that the educational film only developed after the cinema had been shorn of some of its music-hall and fairground element. Teaching with the aid of cinematography commenced long before nature-study films were introduced to the entertainment-going public in



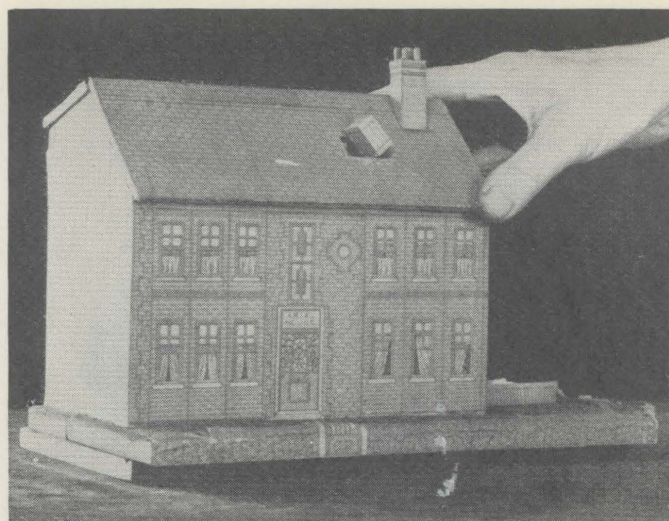
Sir Johnson Forbes-Robertson in *Hamlet* 1912



From the *Westminster Gazette*, November 1908
Courtesy Percy Smith

1902. There were, in fact, scientific research workers utilising film from the moment it was invented. In fact the scientific Marey Institute in Paris played a very important part in the development of the cinema as a whole. But the first Englishman whose scientific pictures were exploited commercially was F. Martin Duncan, now librarian to the Zoological Society. He constructed his first chronological camera as a schoolboy in 1886, ten years before the introduction of cinematography. But it was not until 1902, when he was giving a demonstration of some of his nature films at the old London Camera Club, that it was suggested that his pictures should be included in the programme then being shown by Charles Urban at the Alhambra Theatre, which was under the management of Douglas Cox. Mr. Duncan spoke at these performances for three months, and so successful was the experiment, that during the antics of ants and strange insects none of the patrons went to the bar. Some time later Charles Urban of the Warwick Trading Company, who did most to encourage educational cinema in England, made an arrangement whereby he generally distributed the Martin Duncan films. This continued until 1907 or 1908 when Mr. Duncan decided only to produce films for his own research. Another pioneer, Robert Paul, in 1910 decided that the cinema business was too precarious a profession.

British Instructional Films *Secrets of Nature* and the Gaumont British Instructional series, *Secrets of Life*, are known to everyone today; and although scarcely anyone in the film business has met Mr. Percy Smith, his name is a household word. But probably few people associate the Mr. Percy Smith of today with the F. Percy Smith who created a sensation in 1908 with a film called *Educated Flies*, which led to a number of political cartoons in which Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Balfour played the leading parts. Percy Smith became interested in cinema through his hobby, Natural History, while he was employed in the Board of Education. He made his first professional film in May, 1908 for Charles Urban: *The Dragon-fly and Sparassus*. During the following six weeks Percy Smith made seven pictures for which he received £10. He took films of spiders, static electricity, and innumerable animal and insect subjects.



"Prop" for an early Percy Smith advertising film
Photo by Kurt Romm

Nos. 2246 and 2295 in the Urbanora catalogue are the famous *Educated Flies*. "The Fly Experiments with a Balancing Pole, a Ball, a Cork Mat and a Shell. Friendly Assistance is rendered by another Fly, who climbs a large ball, which is rapidly twirled by the acrobatic insect. Tremendous leverage is shown by the Fly manipulating a miniature Dumb-bell, and excessively comic episodes are furnished from first to last." The second picture shows the uneducated fly engaged upon putrid meat; and finally there appears a Nursemaid Bluebottle in a cap and apron who plays with a tiny doll. And these extraordinary things were not faked.

In 1909 Percy Smith constructed his first "machine" for photographing plant growth; while the fanciful side of his mind expressed itself now and again in the making of ingenious trick-films, either for one or another of Urban's companies, or for commercial firms who wished to advertise their goods: tea, matches, flour or furniture. These were some of the earliest advertisement films made in England.

TRICK FILMS

One of Percy Smith's most successful trick-films was *Animated Putty*, "an exceedingly clever and original trick-film. Quite unique in the way effects are obtained, and sure to arouse the wonder and interest of any audience. (1) A lump of putty shows signs of animation. (2) As we watch the shapeless mass assumes the shape of an eagle's head, every detail of plumage clearly defined. (3) Another transformation; foliage begins to appear. (4) The putty winds itself in circles . . . and behold a windmill takes shape. (5) A lady, Mephistopheles and his imps and a small boy follow in turn, phosphorescent glowings add to the effect". This "quaint fantasy, wonderful and diverting" was a style of film which had a great vogue before the War. Almost every programme included a trick-film which occupied the position now held by the cartoon, which, at that time, was developing in France, but did not get a foothold in England until during the War.

Another fascinating trick-film of 1912 was *Magical Matches*, maker unknown. According to the Bioscope, "A silver match box appears on the screen, the lid opens,

the matches come out and make up wonderful figures. For instance, the match sticks fall into groups of acrobats, and afterwards shape into a series of revolving stars, which in turn become a laughing sun. A man's head is formed and other matches become pipes, one after the other flying into the man's mouth . . . then the matches sticks turn into a horse, a cart and a driver and off they go. Finally the matches fly into position as a skeleton which after many curious evolutions, takes its head in its arms and disappears".

The British cinema went through almost as many evolutions as the "Magical Matches" between 1907 and 1914.

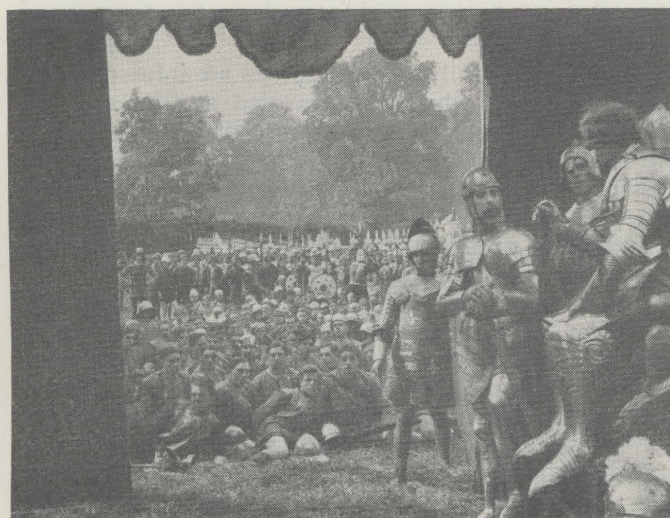
THE GOLDEN AGE OF BRITISH FILMS

It expanded in every direction, and it seemed that everything that could be conquered in the territory of the cinema might easily fall under the domain of the British film trade. It must have appeared that our cinemas could never be seriously assailed by America when the Durbar was filmed in Kinemacolour. The Americans had nothing more sensational to offer to the public than that. Even sound pictures, or rather pictures which seemed to sing and talk, were being made by Gaumont and Hepworth with the aid of the Chronophone and Vivaphone respectively; while the Warwick Trading Company's machine, Cinephone, was featured in something like 200 cinemas in 1909. British pictures were showing a considerable profit. It is said that Samuelson, the distributor of *Sixty Years a Queen*, made £35,000 profit on this film which cost £4000. Technically, we were recognised to be in advance of America. In 1909, the American correspondent of the *Biscope* wrote, "In many respects the American film manufacturer is behind his English competitor . . . Hitherto (in America) the policy seems to have been that 'any old thing' has done. But it will not last much longer."

We might have held our own in spite of the business acumen of America had it not been for the War, when our cinema was shattered as much from the reaction of the trade towards the War, as it was by the War itself. The third article of this series will be compiled from official statements published during the War. It will indicate what the position of the British cinema was during War time, and how, in more ways than one, it became a skeleton carrying its own head.

SOME FILMS 1907-1914

- LOVE OF A HUNCHBACK, the first film made by Butcher's; 1907
 MESSINA EARTHQUAKE, made by J. A. Williamson; 1908
 EDUCATED FLIES, sensational nature film by Percy Smith; 1908
 BIRD SERIES, made by Richard and Cherry Kearton for Urbanora; 1909
 HENRY VIII, made by Will G. Barker, with Sir Herbert Tree, Arthur Bouchier and Violet Vanbrugh; 1909
 TILLEY THE TOMBOY, with Alma Taylor and Chrissie White; made by Hepworth; 1910
 ANIMATED PUTTY, trick-film made by Percy Smith for Kineto-Urban; 1911
 DELHI DURBAR, Urban film in Kinemacolour; 1911
 COMIN' THRO' THE RYE, made by Hepworth; 1912
 MAGICAL MATCHES, Urbanora trick-film; 1912
 THE WOODEN ATHLETES, Urbanora trick-film; 1912
 PAPER CUTTINGS, Kineto trick-film; 1912
 BRIGADIER GERARD, made by the Barker Motion Photography Company, with Lewis Waller and Madge Titheradge; 1913
 SIXTY YEARS A QUEEN, made by Will G. Barker, and distributed by Samuelson; 1913
 HAMLET, the last performance of Sir Johnson Forbes-Robertson, made by Hepworth; 1913
 DAVID GARRICK, with Sir Charles Wyndham; 1913
 MACBETH, with Arthur Bouchier and Violet Vanbrugh; 1913
 A CHRISTMAS CAROL, with Seymour Hicks; made by Hepworth and Bentley; 1913
 A MESSAGE FROM MARS, with Sir Charles Hawtrey; 1913
 DAVID COPPERFIELD, made by Hepworth and Bentley; 1913
 LORNA DOONE, Clarendon Film; 1913
 JANE SHORE, made by the Barker Motion Photography Company; 1914
 THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP, made by Hepworth and Bentley; 1914
 BARNABY RUDGE, made by Hepworth and Bentley; 1914
 KEITH PROWSE ARMY FILM, directed by Maurice Elvey; 1914



Scenes from Will Barker's *Jane Shore*



Edward IV's camp and Edward IV lying in state in Old St. Paul's

NOTES ON THE CINEMA IN ITALY

By ALBERTO CAVALCANTI who lectured on British film music at the Congress

THE BIENNALE Exhibition of Venice is not, from now on, the only external manifestation of Italian interest in films. Florence decided that the International Congress of Music, —a prestige counterpart of the *Maggio Musicale* Festival, —should not limit its activities to music alone. Between Concerts and Operas, Banquets and Excursions, the Congress was transferred from the splendours of the ancient palace of the Signoria to the small and bare Experimental Theatre G.U.F. In the palace we were treated to many wandering speeches by prominent musicians who showed, on the whole, a surprising worship of the dying Concert Hall, with its vanishing audiences, and contempt (only half disguised) of such things as radio and gramophone. In the theatre, sound technicians, film directors and film musicians, were asked to discuss something much more precise: the problem of music for the film.

Of these, Darius Milhaud, the great French composer, was the most successful. "Is the Wagner solution of lyric drama applicable to the screen?" was the subject given to him. Milhaud's Mediterranean sympathies don't flow to Wagner. He cleverly referred to Verdi, whose *Othello* was brilliantly produced at the Festival, as a much nearer solution to screen music. His frank attack on Wagner was both clear and elegant. Ugo Ojetti, the humanist, whose international prestige gives him, in his own country, an authority only comparable with D'Annunzio's legendary one, was just as much at ease in these practical questions as he had been amongst the cloudy æsthetics of the "pure" musicians.

Three sets of film examples were shown—Italian, French and English. The French, which included films by Pabst and Alexeieff, scored a good point with an excerpt from Cloche's documentary of Provence, *Terre d'Amour*, with music by Germaine Taillefer. The choice of the fragment showing the remnants of Roman civilisation could not have been more felicitous: its theme, Roman Imperialism, being one of the current official hobbies. The clever transitions achieved from her own delicate music to rhythmic chorus are strongly influenced by G.P.O. Film Unit experiments.

The English selection, which was compiled in collaboration with the British Film Institute, seemed somehow more complete. It was divided in two parts: the first devoted to dramatic pictures with examples of music from Bliss, Benjamin and Walton, and the second to the documentary school including music and sounds by Britten, Leigh and Jaubert. It showed plainly the strength of this latter kind of film in England as well as its international superiority. The inevitable *Night Mail* was followed by Priestley's film-lecture on internationalism, *We Live in Two Worlds*, which had its first showing there. Both had an open success, notwithstanding the references to "this second world of international understanding" in the heart of a country under fascist régime. Machiavellic Ojetti summed up such a warm reception as a "non-political acceptance of practical human intercourse," or something to the same effect.

We were, by this time, fully aware of the non-political judgment of the Italian public, which had severely booted, the night before, *Il Deserto Tentato*, Casella's opera on the Abyssinian Conquest. The whole incident was described

by a clever cartoonist on the front page of a local paper, as: "*il successo tentato e il teatro deserto.*"

On the other hand, this seems to prove that the evolution of the documentary towards closer human observation and the choice of deeper subjects is making it outgrow propaganda as well as formulas of æsthetics. Documentary in its new form has acquired a much wider significance.

The Italian selection consisted of a sequence from *The White Squadron* and another from a film by Bragaglia, with a strong documentary background, on the Carara marble quarries. The latter was rather slow but suggested amazing possibilities in its atmosphere. These films were only shown, it was announced, as an "act of presence," two large films being in preparation at present, *Condottiere* and *Scipione l'Africano*, both made in two languages.

These costume pictures and the ceremonial opening of the huge new studios in Rome, seem to indicate that Italian cinema is following the same lines as the English. In both cases Hollywood has attracted and seems likely to keep the pick of the national personnel: Capra, Durante, Carminati and Armetta are the Italian representatives in the American film industry. In both cases the creation of working-units instead of the building of palatial accommodation would seem, to the outsider, a better policy. And the choice of simpler stories, too, instead of these spectacular pageants, so dear to the cinema-magnates. In the case of Italy, with its people so various, against sea or mountain, its different crafts and, above all, the infinity of everyday-life-dramas, it seems somehow preposterous to revert to ancient history, however useful it may be for propaganda purposes.

The main fact about Italian cinema developments, besides this "forcing" of the industry, is the will of the Government to organise its growth; the Venice Exhibition with its awards, and now, the Florence Congress, together with the International Educational Cinematographic Institute in Rome (concentrating on the Film Encyclopædia task), form a sort of trilogy, which keeps the Italian industry in contact with the outside film-world. A fourth, and the most promising organisation of all, is the Research Institute, also in Rome, with its monthly publication *Black and White*, which is meant, I gather, to collaborate with the Government Film Offices.

Let us hope that all these enterprises are infused by the same Latin spirit which was revealed at Florence, the spirit which applauds an international film, in spite of the political situation, and disapproves of a jingoistic opera; and above all, that they will encourage the right kind of films, films made, not for imperialist propaganda, but with the purpose of making known to other nations, the Italian people *as it is*, with its aims and its struggles.

In this domain the new documentary can serve them well. Knowledge of the present as it is, may prove as successful as the eagerness to organise so many shows of past glories. However much people like myself enjoy the famous "Mostras," the admirable Tintoretto exhibition at Venice, the Gonzaga one at Mantova, and the Stradivarius one at Cremona, knowledge of life in the wine-villages in Tuscany, of the sulphur miners in Sicily, of the steel workers of the North, is far more valuable to our understanding of Italy and the future peace of the world.

THE KING'S BREAKFAST



The King



LOTTE REINIGER



The Queen



The Alderney said sleepily "You'd better tell His Majesty."



The Royal Dairymaid watches as the Royal Breakfast is prepared in the Royal Kitchen.

For her first English Silhouette Film, Miss Lotte Reiniger, has chosen A. A. Milne's poem for children, *The King's Breakfast*. The music, by H. Fraser-Simson, has been arranged and orchestrated by Ernest Irving, who also conducted the orchestra; Olive Groves and George Baker

sing the verse. The film is the first production of a new organisation, Thorold Dickinson's *Facts and Fantasies*. Miss Reiniger's second film for this organisation, already in production, is from her own scenario *Dream Circus*, to music from the ballet *Pulcinella* by Stravinsky.

WHAT ONE PUBLIC SAYS IT LIKES

Comments on the Bernstein Questionnaire by RICHARD FORD

THE RESULTS of Mr. Bernstein's fifth questionnaire are now available. That in itself is remarkable, for Mr. Bernstein is the only director of a circuit of cinemas (about 14 in the London area and 14 in the provinces) who has systematically issued questionnaires to his patrons.

In February, 1937, 325,000 questionnaires were "issued" and 160,000 were "completed and returned." Without knowing the exact meaning of these terms, the return—about 50 per cent of the total—is astonishing. In normal inquiries of this type, where no inducement is offered, a 10 per cent return is good, but this 50 per cent return suggests that the cinema public is very keen indeed to give its views, when opportunity is given.

The most attractive questions, from the public's point of view, concern film stars. "*Who are your favourite film stars?*" Answers show that Gary Cooper, Clark Gable, and Charles Laughton; Norma Shearer, Myrna Loy, and Greta Garbo top the list. But what help is this to Mr. Bernstein when Norma Shearer and Greta Garbo appear in about one film every two years?

"*Which Stars do you dislike most?*" Answers show that James Cagney, Ralph Lynn and Charles Chaplin; Mae West, Greta Garbo, and Marlene Dietrich top the list. This question reveals the fundamental misapprehension that pervades much of this inquiry. Mr. Bernstein, like all other exhibitors, knows that James Cagney and Mae West are box office attractions, and Garbo, Dietrich and Chaplin are even bigger. The answers to this question are valueless because the public does not normally dislike a star, but dislikes the rôle he (or she) plays. The public will, therefore, continue to flock to the film stars they "most dislike," provided they are suitably publicised. Was this perhaps revealed in the answers which Mr. Bernstein does not publish, to a subsequent question: "*Do you actually stay away from a cinema where a film is showing which features any of the stars you dislike?*"

The answers to the next question: "*Which small part players would you like to see in star rôles?*" may be useful for producers, but the players named are mostly character actors (Eric Blore, Una Merkel, Helen Broderick) who could not sustain full length leading parts. The small part players, named in earlier questionnaires, who are now stars (Franchot Tone, Ginger Rogers, Robert Donat) have altered their style or have matured with experience. The question only reveals which small part players are liked.

But what is the value of the question: "*What kind of feature films do you prefer?*" The categories named are Society, Drama, Comedy, Historical, Musical Comedy, Love-Romance, War, Thriller-Adventure. The fact is that every popular film contains at least two or three of these categories inside it, and it is the balance or mixture of them that makes the film good box office or otherwise. This question should deal with the elements of which films are composed, but no one except a trained psychologist could provide the answers. The replies put Historical films very low in the list, but who has seen a historical film that does not contain elements of Thriller-Adventure, Comedy, Love-Romance or War, either singly or combined?

The question "*What kind of Short Films do you like?*" is much happier; and the results in the following order—Cartoons, Travel, Sport (men), Musical (women) would be generally endorsed and indeed are generally known.

"*Do you object to Advertising Films?*" obtains a 50 per cent Yes, 50 per cent No reply. The editors of the Report point out that "No" answers may be influenced "by a desire not to seem impolite." One might also suggest that the public does not recognise an advertising film if it is sufficiently wrapped up in entertainment. There follow the preferences for double-feature and single-feature programmes. These are entirely a matter of local habit; and the 80 per cent preference for double features probably reflects the existing habits in the localities of the Bernstein cinemas. The size of the minority which prefers single feature programmes is worth noting.

"*Name your Favourite Film Director and which of his Films did you like best?*" reveals a growing awareness to the Director's name. Fourteen directors are mentioned; the first six are Capra, Korda, Van Dyke, Hitchcock, Lloyd, de Mille. (The current publicity description of the director of *You Only Die Once*, as Fritz "Fury" Lang is relevant).

The answers to questions concerning press film gossip are not published; but the surprising fact emerges that over 40 per cent of the replies "listen-in to B.B.C. film criticism"—surprising, because the B.B.C. are said to be searching for the right policy in film criticism. The question should have been sub-divided into listening "regularly" and "occasionally." And how many said "Yes" to please the authorities?

"*How many times a week do you usually go to the Pictures?*" The comparative results are interesting; twice a week (43 per cent in 1934, 45 per cent in 1937). Once a week (27 per cent in 1934, 30 per cent in 1937). Three times a week (12 per cent in 1934, 14 per cent in 1937). The last figure is significant.

Some of the suggestions for improving cinema entertainment are well worth noting: Cast lists at the end as well as the beginning of films; quicker releases; bigger and better ashtrays; cover for outside queues; a rigid ban on the consumption of peanuts; newspapers should devote weekly film news to general releases, not to West End programmes.

The final question asking filmgoers to put "Outstanding," "Good," "Fair," or "Bad," against a list of films is a request for one word obituary notices. The practical purpose of this question is elusive. Both *Modern Times* and *Things To Come* get heavy "bad" votes, and *Mutiny on the Bounty* heads the "outstanding" votes.

But how far do the results influence Mr. Bernstein or anyone else. How far should they? They certainly add to our knowledge of what other trades call "Consumer preference." The public which fills in the forms and reads the results may hope for more of their "likes" and less of their "dislikes" in the future. But what of the people who do not complete questionnaires and how far are those who do answer representative of those who don't? Would it be possible, one wonders, to devise an inquiry which would really produce results of sociological and psychological value. Time, and Mr. Simon Rowson, may show.

THE CINEMA IN FRANCE 1936

France continues to supply the greater proportion of continental films shown in this country: during 1936 the proportion was eleven French films out of a total of thirty from ten countries, and the films included *La Kermesse Héroïque* which ran for over six months at Studio One, and is now being shown at a number of cinemas throughout this country. In this article, FELIX ROSE, French film journalist, editor, lecturer and broadcaster here and in France, and at one time assistant publicity manager for First National Films in Paris, presents a survey of the Cinema in France in 1936.

THERE WAS a time when the French film industry was one of the most active and most potent forces in the development of cinematographic art. In these happy, if not altogether fat years, French producers vied with one another to express the ever-changing drama of man, woman, and earth in compelling, original pictures. Then followed the lean years of the depression, during which the advent of the "talkies," after a short-lived boom, introduced new difficulties. The craving for sensation replaced the old longing for art. Even then the public—the backbone of the industry—was either too poor or too adamant to be coaxed often, if at all, to visit the cinema theatre where he was offered little or no solace. The industry felt itself tottering. During the last few years, however, France has been emerging from the shadows of political and economic confusion. 1936 has been a stabilising year, during which the film industry in France has not only held its own but forged ahead.

CINEMAS AND CINEMAGOERS

In France, with its population of about 42,000,000, there are some 3,350 cinemas equipped for sound: the annual box-office receipts of these cinemas are about one billion francs, or approximately, £10,000,000. In Great Britain, with its population of about 44,000,000, the number of cinemas equipped for sound has almost reached 5,000: the annual box-office receipts of these cinemas is certainly not less than £40,000,000. These approximate comparative figures speak for themselves. The French people, as a whole, has not yet taken to "the pictures" as an important amenity of life: indeed it has been estimated that not more than 10 per cent of the whole population are regular film-goers. But the figures given above do not complete the picture. France is largely a rural country, and the population is more widely distributed than in Great Britain: the population of 42,000,000 is spread over 213,000 square

miles as compared with Great Britain's population of 44,000,000 spread over 95,000 square miles. To serve the rural population in France there are some 4,800 Postes Ruraux, rural "cinemas" using 17.5 mm. projectors, giving perhaps three shows a week or one a day, according to demand. In general, they are conducted by ordinary commercial enterprise but 1,700 of them are run by the Catholic Church. The extent to which these Postes Ruraux serve in place of cinemas as they are known in the cities and towns in France and Great Britain, may be judged from the fact that 55,000 programmes were supplied to them in 1936. In the type of programme they present they do not differ from the ordinary cinemas. The method of exhibition is more economic than building and equipping large cinemas, the total number of which, in spite of new cinemas built in cities and towns, has actually fallen during the last six years.

REORGANISATION OF THE PRODUCTION INDUSTRY

The new social and economic legislation introduced in France has reacted favourably on the film industry. In so far as it has increased production costs by 40 per cent (a good feature film to-day costs on an average two million francs, or approximately £20,000), it has forced the producing companies to give greater attention to quality. A poor picture, or even a picture that is just ordinary, is not worth making because it is certain to show a loss. That is the main reason why the French film industry is now making such great strides that it is again held in high esteem throughout the world. A threat made last year by the Conseil National Economique to take steps to place the industry under state control also had its effect. The industry itself had to evolve some kind of corporate control over its operations, with the result that it has become strongly organised; the grouping of both employers and



Lynn Harding as Henry VIII

Yvette Pierre as Queen Elizabeth

Sacha Guitry as Napoleon III

Yvette Pierre as Queen Victoria

Les Perles de la Couronne (Tobis)



L'Appel du Silence, produced by Leon Poirier

Compagnie Universelle Cinematographique

employees in responsible Unions makes for more efficient working. Yet another factor that influenced the situation was the introduction of British capital. In 1936, it is believed that about 50 films were partly financed from British sources. This development, in a great part, contributed to the creation of the *caisse de centralisation* or Centralised Production Fund with an organisation for the control of all accounts relating to every stage of film production, distribution, and exhibition. The strict supervision effected by this central body has kept out the sharks that previously battered on the industry. Furthermore, the liquidation of the two great French film Trusts, Pathé and Gaumont, has stimulated the independent film producers to greater achievements. Instead of hampering such producers, these two ex-producing organisations now help them by putting studios, technical services and cinema circuits at their disposal. French film technicians compare favourably with their counterparts in the United States or elsewhere. What is more, the great majority have the advantage of being young, and therefore keen and enthusiastic workers.

With the temporary eclipse of Pathé and Gaumont in the producing sphere, there remain some 85 independent producers whose output varies from one to four or five films per year. As a result, the films produced show considerable variety and originality. The time and folly of the costly super-film is now over in France. As has already been mentioned, French producers readily spend £20,000 on a first-class feature film, but rarely much more. Bitter experiences, both at home and abroad, have taught them better. This does not prevent the success of their films in quite a number of foreign countries. When all is said and done, it is talent that counts and cashes; and talent has never been lacking in France, as witness Jacques Feyder, Maurice Tourneur, Leon Poirier, Marcel L'Herbier, Abel Gance,

Jean Benoit-Levy, J. de Baroncelli among the older (in experience) men; and René Clair, Julien Duvivier, Jean Renoir, Marc Allégret, Marcel Carné, Pierre Billon, among the younger directors. Nor must one forget the foreign producers of note who have made their home in France: Pabst, Ophüls, Litwak, and Volkoff. With such names to conjure with, French film production has every chance of making its mark in the future as in the past, and even more so.

FRENCH FILMS FOR FOREIGN MARKETS

With good authors, scenarists and directors, admirably served by artists of repute whose ranks are augmented every year by young new stars (some of whom unfortunately are soon lured away by the joint appeal of Hollywood and the dollar), it again becomes possible for the French film production to make a bid for the foreign markets. In fact, the French film exports in Europe are to-day second only in importance to those of Germany. French films go to: Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, Austria, Poland, Roumania, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Egypt, and last but not least, the U.S.A.

It is now generally realised in France, at any rate, that the best international film is not the film that boasts of a score or so of important "international" artists and technicians, but the film that has a distinctive French background or French flavour, and such human and pictorial interest that it appeals to mankind everywhere. There is now in all countries to-day an eagerness to get to know the foreigner better. French films especially can meet the need, for the reason that the French temperament has individuality tempered with reason and good taste.

The keynote of the French production is realistic "human appeal," irrespective of the type of film produced. Subjects

of too unsavoury a character are firmly discouraged, although a few misguided producers still believe there should be a few on the market. A film on Landru, the French Bluebeard, which was announced some months ago, was not proceeded with, thanks to a trade outcry.

CENSORSHIP

Official control of the film industry and the censorship of films is vested in the Ministry of Fine Arts, which works in close co-operation with the Home Office and the Foreign Office. The Ministry can ask producers and renters to make cuts in their films and can prohibit or suspend the exhibition of any film. It also controls the application of the quota regulations and any other agreements in force in the industry. Without the censorship certificate and the quota visa issued by the Ministry no film, either standard or sub-standard, can be publicly exhibited in France.

PROTECTING THE HOME INDUSTRY

During 1936, 117 French films were produced in France; this represents one-third of the total number of films from all sources (331) released for general exhibition. As will be seen from the figures given below, the other two-thirds comprised 25 films produced in French in other countries and 189 "dubbed" films as follows: America, 154; Great Britain, 17; Germany, 16; U.S.S.R., 2. A film to be generally released in France must either have been produced in French or, if it was originally made in some other language, must be "dubbed" with French dialogue, or given a French commentary in French studios. More than this the total

number of foreign films—"dubbed" or with French commentary—which may be generally exhibited in any six months is limited by Government decree, and during the year ending 1936 was limited to some 190. It has recently been proposed by the French Parliamentary Cinema Group in a report presented to the Minister of Education that it should be limited to 100. This limitation not only provides protection for the French producers, but also ensures that foreign producers import only their best or most suitable films. There are 15 special cinemas—5 in Paris and 10 in the provinces—in which an unlimited number of foreign films in their original versions may be shown. During 1936, 263 foreign films were shown in these theatres and 146 of them were subsequently "dubbed" for general exhibition, together with 45 foreign films which were only released in "dubbed" version. The source of these 263 foreign films released for limited exhibition is given in the table below. The considerable degree of protection given to the French producers seems to be justified by the popularity of the French films, in competition with foreign films, in the French cinemas. A trade referendum, organised by *La Cinematographie Francaise*, revealed that of all the films released in 1936, 30 French films—out of 117 released—were among the biggest box-office successes throughout France. Among them were: *L'Appel du Silence*, *Le Roi*, *Mayerling*, *Les Bas-Fonds*, *Le Mioche*, *L'Equipage*, and *Koenigsmark*.

TWO-FEATURE BILLS AND NON-FICTIONAL FILMS

The two-feature bill, usually consisting of one French



Louis Jouvet in *Les Bas-Fonds*, from the novel *Na-Dnié* by Maxim Gorky

Productions Albatros

film and one "dubbed" foreign film, is still in favour, possibly because there is a dearth of "shorts." Whether it is due to lack of funds or of enterprise, the French producer fights shy of "shorts." American companies, well-stocked in this respect, are finding them a valuable adjunct to their already flourishing businesses. (British producers, please note!) While short interest and travel films are shunned by French producers, full-length feature films of a documentary type always find backers, and meet with very satisfactory box office results. One or two producers, such as Leon Poirier, specialise in this field. His *L'Appel du Silence* depicting the life of the famous French Monk, Père de Foucauld, in the Sahara, had the honour of being chosen for the Grand Prix du Cinema Français in 1936, and drew the biggest crowds on record. Other films such as *Courrier-Sud*, dealing with long-distance flights, confirmed the interest invariably shown by the French public in deeds of courage and enterprise. Numerous interest films have been made in connection with the Paris International Exhibition, and the production of educational films generally has the backing of the French Government. The Musée Pédagogique is the central organisation for research and distribution. Among the firms catering especially for educational authorities, Pathé produced some 30 really remarkable films in 1936, and everyone knows the splendid work of Jean Painlevé, whose films on nature and science have led the way for many years.

To-day, a sane outlook prevails in all branches of the French film industry. It is realised, by all engaged in it, that while the industry must pay its way, the films produced must retain that undefinable touch of artistry that makes films speak a stirring language to all. That is substantially why French films mean something abroad, although still too few of them are shown there. Millions of English people, for instance, are not likely to forget the original *J'accuse* of Abel Gance—who incidentally plans soon to produce a modern version of that film, or René Clair's *Le Million*. France can justly be proud of such long-lived memories. It vouches for a new brilliant future. In the first four months of 1937, some 50 films, or nearly half the French output for 1936, have been either completed or are being produced.

ANALYSIS OF FILMS RELEASED IN FRANCE DURING 1936 (Based on a Table prepared for La Cinematographie Française by Pierre Autre)

Country of Origin	French films produced in France	French films produced in French in other countries	Foreign films "dubbed" or with French commentary for general exhibition	Foreign films in original form for exhibition in 15 cinemas only	Foreign films "dubbed" after limited exhibition to be deducted	Total number of films released in France
France	117					117
U.S.A.			154	196	119	231
Great Britain ...		2	17	25	12	32
Germany		13	16	25	13	41
Austria		1				1
Italy		3				3
Czechoslovakia...		5		1		6
U.S.S.R.			2	14	2	14
Spain				2		2
Belgium		1				1
	117	25	189	263	146	448

Let us hope that greater and better interchanges between British and French film concerns are ahead. They will do much to ensure the prosperity of the industry in both countries; they will also promote better understanding between the peoples of both countries.

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AN EXHIBITION OF COSTUME DESIGNS

THE TYNESIDE Film Society has followed up the highly successful pioneer exhibition of Art Direction, which it organised a year ago, by another pioneer exhibition of the work of leading Costume Designers.

The artists represented were M. René Hubert and Professor Ernst Stern. M. Hubert lent sketches for the following films: *Fire Over England*, *Dark Journey*, *Under the Red Robe*, *Men Are Not Gods*, and the now abandoned *Cyrano de Bergerac*. In addition there were a number of sketches for the costumes in the following stage productions *Swing Along*, *Balalaika*, *Rise and Shine*, *Careless Rapture*, and *Garden Party*. Professor Stern was represented by sketches for *Pagliacci*, *Land Without Music*, *Marriage of Corbal*, and by photographs of sketches for *Two Orphans*. Altogether there were almost 250 designs on view, and many of them the Society was able to match by still photographs of the completed costumes as they appeared.

The sketches of the two artists afforded an interesting contrast in method. Those of Stern were made in water-

colour upon ordinary drawing paper; those of Hubert were made upon tracing paper, and were remarkable not only for the great delicacy of their execution, but for the way in which they managed to suggest the shimmering or diaphanous quality of dresses and a real sense of texture and material. Many of the sketches bore pencilled instructions concerning the exact materials that were to be used in the making, and a few had specimens of the material itself attached. M. Hubert's method, so he explained to the Chairman of the Society, is to design from the coloured material, not from the pigment.

Many of the sketches revealed such exquisite colour harmonies that one felt that the black and white photography of screen was often less than fair to the taste and skill of the designer.

The exhibition also contained a number of reproductions of Messel's designs for the costumes in *Romeo and Juliet*.

The exhibition, which lasted a week and was open free to the public, was held in the Hatton Art Gallery.

QUOTA — COST AND QUALITY

The Board of Trade, on June 11th, outlined its tentative proposals for a new Act to succeed the Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, which expires during 1938, and invited comments on them from the film trade. The report and recommendations of the Moyne Committee which was appointed to consider the position of British films and to advise the Board of Trade on any new legislation which might be advisable were discussed in SIGHT AND SOUND NO. 20. The Board of Trade's proposals have been the subject of considerable discussion in the film trade, the three sections of which have submitted detailed comments on them to the Board, and in *The Times*. Adverse criticism of the proposals has come, in the main, from the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association which has reaffirmed its belief that a quality test for British films should be incorporated in any new legislation, and from independent producers, renters and exhibitors, as distinct from the producing-renting-exhibiting combines and affiliations, who maintain that the cost test will impede and perhaps kill independent initiative and enterprise. A feature of the correspondence in *The Times*, has been the revival of the suggestion for reciprocal arrangements between American renters and British producers for the distribution of British films in America. Such an arrangement was first discussed in 1926 before the passing of the Cinematograph Films Act, 1927, and was again proposed by Mr. Simon Rowson in his evidence before the Moyne Committee. We give here details of the Board of Trade proposals and extracts from letters written to *The Times* by members of the film industry and from an article by Mr. John Grierson published in *The Fortnightly* for July, 1937.

The Government's proposals for new legislation contained in a White Paper issued on July 29th are set out on page 57 of this issue and will be discussed in the next issue of SIGHT AND SOUND.

FIRST BOARD OF TRADE PROPOSALS

1. That the initial quotas for long films should be 20 per cent for renters and 15 per cent for exhibitors.
2. That the quotas should increase by stages over the ten-year period to 30 per cent for renters and to 25 per cent for exhibitors.
3. That, for the purposes of the renter's quota for long films, a cost test should be instituted of 50s. a foot with a minimum of £15,000.
4. That films costing £7. 10s. a foot and over (with a minimum of £45,000) should, with the permission of the Board of Trade, count twice for quota.
5. That the Board of Trade should have power (a) to vary, at three yearly intervals, in either direction the scheduled quotas; (b) to vary, if they deem it necessary, the cost tests basis.
6. That films costing less than the minimum should be available for registration for exhibitor's quota only. It would be open, however, to a producer or renter to apply for full quota for such a film on the ground of its "special exhibition value."
7. That a separate quota should be instituted for short films; the initial quotas to be 10 per cent for renters and 5 per cent for exhibitors, with a gradual increase to 20 per cent and 15 per cent respectively over the ten-year period.
8. That there should be no cost test for short films at the outset, but that the Board of Trade should have power (a) to impose such a test; and (b) to vary the quotas at three yearly intervals.
9. That registration under the Act should apply to all films except news reels and commercial advertisements.
10. That the Board of Trade should continue to be assisted in the administration of the Act by an Advisory Committee constituted on the same lines as the present Committee.

PLEA FOR RECIPROCITY

BASIL DEAN, Managing Director, Associated Talking Pictures

The public is being misled if it imagines that the new Film Act will bring about a revolution in these appalling market conditions overnight. (*Mr. Dean discussed in previous paragraphs the size of the American home market and America's domination of world markets.*) If the producer repeats his previous attempts to insert competitive values into his pictures in an endeavour to secure a place in the world's markets without such Government protection as will enable him to extract a cash guarantee from the other side, disaster will overtake him and his financial supporters, as it has done in the past. Much of the present financial chaos has been due to this attempted assault upon an impregnable position. On the other hand, no one desires

that British production should sink entirely into a state of vassalage to the Americans, making only quota pictures at however high a cost, merely to supply their legal requirements. Good pictures are made only when the producer is imbued with enthusiasm and has a genuine urge to create something. It is for these reasons that the *working* British producer asks that the Government in its new Bill shall extend its protection into the world's markets, in however small a degree, by granting relief from quota to a certain percentage of the total film imported in exchange for the distribution and exhibition of worthwhile British pictures in the country of origin of the imported film, which, for all practical purposes, means the United

States. While it is probably true that the Americans would only be interested in the higher priced pictures, a suggested scale of percentages of negative cost has been worked out and submitted to the Board of Trade so that if some unknown British producers should appear on the horizon who have the genius to produce much better pictures at a much lower cost than have hitherto been produced in this country, they too will have the opportunity of extending their markets abroad

In conclusion, may I remind your readers of the basic truth, that there can be no successful British film industry

without good pictures; and that neither the renter nor the exhibitor can hope to prosper without them. In other words, crudely stated, it remains a manufacturers' problem first, last, and all the time. That is why we maintain our right to prior consideration, both on the part of the Government and on the part of the nation, for it is upon us that the ultimate responsibility rests. By renewed confidence is confidence re-born. If the Government will listen to our pleadings before it is too late we shall have confidence to renew the struggle, and shall be able to invoke once more on the part of the nation that confidence in us which we seem temporarily to have lost.

COST TEST THE SOLUTION

ARTHUR DENT, Director, Associated British Picture Corporation

There is much logic and sound sense in Lord Strabolgi's observations on a quality test for British pictures. A "hanging committee," as he facetiously referred to such a proposed body, I agree is just as likely to misjudge a film unless it were screened in an ordinary cinema theatre with an audience present as film reviewers. Not only do trained observers frequently missfire in judging the merit of a picture, but differences of opinion are just as frequent among trained film buyers. The fact is—and this from long experience in the film business—an audience reaction is the only safe test as to the quality of a picture. Entertainment is a veritable will o' the wisp, and public taste changes, so that film "fans," rather than experts, are the reliable judges.

The fear of reduced production through a cost qualification is groundless, as a cost qualification carrying with it a quota certificate is much more likely to lead to an increase in production than a decrease.

An important factor, of course, is that even if some of the minor producers are unable to afford the £15,000 minimum, the pictures they produce would still cover exhibitors' quota, but would undergo a quality test only when renters' quota certificate is required. As against that, the general standard of all the other British pictures would be improved through the elimination of the quota "quickies," and exhibitors would have better productions from which they could select their quota than they can obtain to-day.

COST TEST MEANS AMERICAN DOMINATION

K. A. NYMAN, Vice-President, Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association

The result of this proposed legislation, if it should go forward in its present form, will be a definite limitation of the films available to cinema exhibitors. At the moment, owing to the fierce competition existing in the exhibition field and the increasing domination by combines of theatres, the independent exhibitor, of whom there are more than three thousand out of a total of five thousand theatres in this country, has had to rely more and more upon the cheaply made British picture and the second-grade American picture for the bulk of his programmes.

There is no doubt in my mind that the foreign film distributors in this country will import fewer of their second-grade films, as the price of the quota film, which they will have to acquire or produce to set off against these pictures, will not make their importation commercially possible. I envisage the American film distributors limiting their individual importation to approximately forty films a year, for which, under the new legislation, they will have to acquire or produce eight British films, but that, rather than make eight British films at £15,000, they will

produce four at £45,000 or more, importing from America for this purpose a Hollywood trained personnel . . . To me, as an exhibitor, this is extremely discouraging, as I will neither be able to obtain the only American pictures I can book at the moment, nor will I be able to obtain these American-British films, as they will inevitably be booked to the large combines. On the other hand, if a quality test were the deciding issue as to whether a film ranked as British quota, it would undoubtedly stimulate the production of a larger number of films by the younger and more progressive elements in the film business, who can only operate on limited budgets.

The effect of these draft proposals will, in my opinion, result in the control of the British film industry being vested in the hands of the larger American film companies and the theatre combines. I do not wish to dwell on the evils of monopoly control, particularly with regard to such a creative medium as the cinema, but I do feel concerned that such a medium of national projection should come under foreign control.

ECONOMY NOT CHEAPNESS

DONALD TAYLOR, Managing Director, Strand Film Company

If a quality test were the only decision, it would give an opportunity to the independent producer, who would represent new abilities and new sources of finance. These independent producers are forced to operate on a limited

budget in their initial stages. It should be noted in this connection that the Realist Film Movement in this country, which is the only branch of the British film industry which has made any serious effort to express the national view-

point, has sprung from a group of people new to the film industry, who have been forced to work with minute sums of money. Yet they have done much good work internationally for the British film industry, and their work has been characterised by a certain honesty of purpose and expression of British characteristics. These new proposals, and here I plead specially as a member of that group, will prevent them from developing their ideals into the larger film class. Because of their habit of working economically and for reasonable wages, they can produce the larger article at rates far below those applying to present-day film production. Is the right of production to be denied to these people because they can produce economically?

Again, much good work has been done in the field

of British comedy by minor companies, also operating on a limited budget. I have in mind the recent production called *The Penny Pool*, made by the Mancunian Film Corporation. It was a crude film technically, its humour was essentially vulgar, it was very cheaply made, and yet it had certain robust British characteristics and deftness in comedy which made it not only a far better box-office proposition than most super films, but also made it a film that was very close to the hearts of the British public.

It is significant in this connection to remember that both Gracie Fields and George Formby, the two British stars whose films make money, were discovered through the medium of the British quota film.

THE REAL ISSUE — COMBINES OR INDEPENDENTS

JOHN GRIERSON

From the confusion of voices one fact emerges clearly—that the big interests of whatever denomination (*i.e.* producers, renters and exhibitors) stand together and the independent interests of whatever denomination do likewise. The battle of the quota Act is only in one aspect a battle for British films. Much more seriously it is a battle for survival on the part of the small men and the simple films.

The Board of Trade proposals certainly represent a praiseworthy attempt to solve the problems raised by conflicting interests, though there are significant omissions of recommendations made by the Moyne Committee.

On the positive side. (1) The quota quickie is eliminated. (2) The American renter is encouraged to produce and/or rent more expensive pictures and, by that guarantee, better ones than were represented by the £6,000 rubbish of the earlier period. (3) The interests of the big British producers are met directly. (4) The interests of the shorts producers are recognized—at least in principle.

On the negative side: (1) Fewer British pictures will be produced. (2) The cost test of £15,000 bears hardly on the independent producer, for without the co-operation of a major renter and a major circuit it would, on present figures, be dangerous to risk so high a sum. The alternative is to regard book-keeping as an art. (3) The scheme puts obstacles in the way of a field which is specially valuable for experiment and apprenticeship. (4) By the elimination of the idea of a detached national commission and the retention of the old trade advisory idea, it puts the independent producer under the burden of applying for quality to a body which representing major interests has in the past proved unsympathetic and destructive. (5) It bears harshly, to the point of extinction, on the independent exhibitor. A rich supply of films is his guarantee against the opposition theatres of the circuits. Apart from the shortening of British production, the effect of the cost clause and of the double quota clause must be to limit the importations of the tail-end pictures from the United States on which the independent exhibitor also depends. One independent describes the situation by saying that he will only be able to run the films he is told to. (6) The proposals pay only lip service to the claims of the short film. One in twenty is an insufficient encouragement to shorts finance. The present position only allows for an

expenditure of £500 on a fifteen minute short film. A market of one in twenty (the odd nineteen represents a dumped market which cannot be challenged) will not allow for any higher expenditure and confines the British short to starved production conditions.

On these points one may properly expect ardent debate when the proposals come before the House of Commons. But it is likely that a major change may be made before then, and to complete the story this should be mentioned. There is a growing movement for a clause which will absolve the American renters from all quota requirements if they will, in return, undertake distribution of British films in the American market. This, the reciprocity proposal, has much, superficially, to recommend it. Having failed dismally to get out films into America on their merits, British producers now see the possibility of legislating into the American market. One or two see the advantage of budgeting on a wider market and maintain that the extra sums for production they would thus obtain from American renters would make all the difference to their qualities. The fallacy of this argument has been amply revealed in the fate of previous highly expensive British films in the American market. It is further evident that no amount of British legislation can make Americans see films they do not want. The reply to this has been succinctly put by one of our more cynical producers—"Should I worry, if it brings me money." Easy money for big British producers would seem, in fact, to be the great advantage of the scheme. It suits particularly those producers who, with the bargaining power of their circuits behind them, can prevail on American renters to buy from their studios.

The principal emphasis in British film affairs to-day is thereby typified. The long-term service of creative and national interests is being sacrificed to short-term financial ones. The Moyne proposals took a long view and aimed at a wise government of the film industry. The prospect has disappeared with the vital omission of the Moyne proposals for a commission which would stand above the conflict of commercial interests. It is natural enough for the Board of Trade to be jealous lest another body usurp its functions, but the loss of the Film Commission must disappoint all who wish to see the anarchies of the trade abated, the interests of minorities preserved, the quality and personal factors encouraged, and the fierce commercial interests of the trade geared to national purposes.



The arrival at Shangri-La, from *Lost Horizon*

Columbia

PENNY PLAIN — NINEPENCE COLOURED

Films of the Quarter Reviewed by ALAN PAGE

SINCE THE moving picture was born, there have been a series of milestones along the road of progress marking technical and artistic developments, and one revolution—the introduction of sound. Everyone knows the story of the historic march stolen on their fellow producers by the Warner brothers and how, for a time, the movie became a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. Now there is another revolution taking place in the industry, but unlike the first, it is bloodless and gradual. Colour will not become suddenly universal the way sound did.

Colour has been talked of and experimented with for so long that, like prosperity, it has seemed to be permanently round the corner. But now, with the perfection of various processes, the straight is in sight with a rosy-fingered dawn ahead. It really does look as though the cinemagoer's ninepence plain is to be exchanged for ninepence coloured. Announcements have been made by producers that promise some thirty movies to be made in colour this year. And that is definitely an advance when one considers that only ten full-length feature films have been made in colour since 1935.

In the last quarter, two colour films have been presented, *Wings of the Morning* and *God's Country and the Woman*. In both, the settings are predominantly open-air and the colour natural and effective. Until the stock is absolutely

perfect, producers are probably wise to keep the colour out of doors as much as possible, since indoor locations call for the delicate and subdued tones which do not as yet photograph so well as the brighter shades. Given space, the latter fit into the picture admirably and the difficulties of make-up are minimised. Colour is still enough of a novelty to distract the attention in both these films. The ideal will not be reached until the reaction of the audience is the same as it is to black and white photography. Where attention is drawn to colour it should be drawn purposely as it was in the red sequence at the Duchess of Richmond's ball in *Becky Sharp*. By using red Mamoulia, conveyed the mood of the scene—panic and impending battle—admirably.

Wings of the Morning is a British picture and has a certain charm and *naïveté* that send the critics away in an indulgent mood. The story is involved and crude with tiresome misunderstandings between the hero and heroine. She is a gipsy of Irish-Spanish descent and he is a Canadian racehorse trainer and they both have everything to lose if her horse does not win the Derby. Naturally, it does, and we are treated to the startling spectacle of a gipsy caravanserai riding in triumph down the course at Epsom. The charm and *naïveté* is mostly supplied by Annabella who looks enchanting and whose acting bears the unmistakable impression of Clair's training. The other colour

film, *God's Country and the Woman*, is a drama of the rivalry between two American lumber camps. At times it is thrilling and at times sentimental, but always it is good to look at with magnificent forest scenery finely photographed.

There was one more film during last quarter that was not entirely in black and white. *Maytime* had certain sequences photographed in a sort of pinkish tint that was skilfully used in scenes of fruit blossom and romance. The whole film has caught that rosy atmosphere of sentiment which will send both simple and sophisticated audiences home in a glow of satisfaction. The story and treatment are of the flash-back variety where an old lady reconciles a boy and a girl by telling them the story of her life and how she herself made the fatal mistake of sacrificing love for an operatic career. This is the most successful sentimental film since the Norma Shearer version of *Smilin' Thru*, and is remarkable for presenting Jeanette MacDonald in an octogenarian make-up that for once does not give the effect of a young girl's face dipped in flour. But why is it that the opening credit titles are much the most ingenious part of the film as indeed is so often the case? It would be interesting to know who is responsible for their arrangement and still more interesting if whoever it is were sometimes to change places with the director.

Frank Capra's new film, *Lost Horizon*, was a disappointment. Capra, on the strength of his previous films, is in danger of becoming the centre of a "legend." Chaplin's long series of comedies have landed him in this unfortunate position, with the result that anything he does now is expected to be perfection itself. No director is infallible, and in *Lost Horizon* Capra is out of his depth. In any case, Hilton's book is not good screen material, so much depends

upon the conversational development of the story once the occupants of the aeroplane have reached Shangri La. The opening sequences, where Conway and his fellow passengers escape from the revolution in Baskul and are subsequently kidnapped by the ruler of the Tibetan monastery settlement, are superbly done. There is plenty of action and five interesting characters are well and quickly established. But once in Shangri La the emphasis shifts from fantasy to the fantastic. Philosophy gives way to the material advantages of this isolated Utopia, and Sino-Hollywood sets and garden vistas weaken the mental struggle between Conway, the British diplomat representing the world as we know it, and Chang, administrator of the monastery and embodiment of a tranquil life from which all the causes and effects of care and strife have been removed. The ending, too, destroys whatever illusions may have been created, by making Conway return to the paradise from which he had escaped. But if Capra has failed in this film, it has been a glorious failure. Ronald Colman was a good choice for the part of Conway, and as far as he is able, he does manage to convey his affinity to the Lama's philosophy. There is a delightful performance by Edward Everett Horton as an exasperated palæontologist, a character that Horton plays so well and Capra handles so effectively.

In a quarter in which nearly all of the better films have been adapted from books or plays, *Captains Courageous* is the most distinguished. This tale of the sea and the humanising of a little boy through his contact with rough fishermen has been filmed with imagination and feeling. On board the fishing boat, the direction, the photography and the acting combine to give the film a depth of understanding which lifts it out of the category of mere entertainment and makes it moving and real. A good deal of the



Spencer Tracy as Manuel in *Captains Courageous* and as Fred in *They Gave Him A Gun*

M.G.M.



(Above) Jack Hulbert and Ciceley Courtneidge in *Take My Tip*
General Film

(Below) Humphrey Bogart in *Black Legion* Warner



credit for this must go to Spencer Tracy for his portrayal of the kindly Portuguese fisherman, Manuel. There are many competent actors on the screen, but few have the sincerity and gift for character that Tracy has. Contact with two such good actors as Tracy and Lionel Barrymore seems to have improved Freddie Bartholomew, who plays the little boy in this film.

Master Bartholomew also appeared briefly in *Lloyd's of London*, a costume piece about a young man who was a boyhood friend of Nelson and who, when he has grown up and has made a career for himself in *Lloyd's*, is able to engineer things so that Nelson can win the Battle of Trafalgar. It is all very improbable, but none the less enjoyable, as so many of these Hollywood versions of history are. Perhaps it is because the Americans do not regard history with the reverence that we do, and are thus able to put first things first and get on with job of making the films entertaining.

You Only Live Once was a remarkable film in many ways. It had one of the most terrific climaxes ever put on to the screen, a climax that came two-thirds of the way through. The hero, after being released from prison, marries the girl who has been waiting for him and tries to make an honest living, but circumstances and his past record are relentlessly against him. When he is sentenced to death for a crime of which he is innocent, his belief in any form of justice is finally shattered. He stages a jail break, and, as he is forcing the prison governor to open the gates, word comes that he has been cleared of the crime and that he is free. Now comes the great moment of the film. The prison chaplain walks towards him with the message, begging him to throw down his gun. But he cannot believe it is not a trick, so profound is his disillusionment with the law. He shoots

the chaplain and makes good his escape. In this way Fritz Lang steers the story to the point where his hero can commit a murder and still retain some of the audience's sympathy. From then on the hero, joined by his wife, is chased through the country until finally they are both killed by the police. This is a grim film of great artistic integrity, shallower in its appeal than *Fury* by reason of the more personal nature of the subject, but packed full of suspense and intelligently acted by Henry Fonda and Sylvia Sydney.

American rackets have provided Hollywood with some of its best story material. *Black Legion* was another sample of Warners' earnest entertainment, cashing in on a Middle West racket that consists of a secret society ostensibly dedicated to the upholding of American citizens' rights against foreigners, but in reality making huge profits out of the firearms its members must buy. The "protection" racket, featured in *They Gave Him a Gun*, a melodramatic tale of a pacifist doughboy whose experiences in the war made him gun-conscious and subsequently a gangster. Franchot Tone badly overplays the doughboy, but Spencer Tracy comes to the rescue with another fine performance.

With Franchot Tone getting tough, we have had Robert Montgomery stepping out of the cocktail bar into the country inn of *Night Must Fall*, where he plays the sinister page boy. The film is nothing more than a photographic version of the stage play, but as there were thrills and suspense in abundance in the latter, and as these have been adequately conveyed to the screen, everything is in order. Montgomery's part, written by an actor for himself, is fool-proof, but that does not stop him from giving a brilliant interpretation, perhaps seemingly more brilliant than it really is, owing to the contrast with the actor's previous roles.



(Above) Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in *Shall We Dance?* Radio

(Below) The climax from *You Only Live Once* United Artists



The most previous of these rôles was in *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney*. This is the third time this piece has been presented to the public, first as a play, then as a talkie with Norma Shearer and now warmed up again for Joan Crawford. Although it has Montgomery, William Powell, the best M.G.M. supporting players and the most glistening M.G.M. sets, this fable of the jewel thief among the aristocrats never becomes more than lukewarm. Let us hope that this is positively the final appearance of that lady. Another re-make was *Seventh Heaven*, the love story that put Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell on the map, this time with Simone Simon and James Stewart competently putting across the sentiment in the more quaint parts of Paris. But is there really such a dearth of new movie material that such films as these should have to be re-made?

It does not seem to matter that the plots of the Astaire-Rogers musicals should be all according to the same pattern. Variations on a nursery theme do very well for them, and all that does matter is that they should have good songs, dance numbers that fit in easily with the comic situations, Eric Blore and Edward Everett Horton. All these they had in *Shall We Dance?* and that should be enough for anyone.

The rivalry between two men for the hand of a girl is another of those themes that permit of an infinite variety of treatment. *I Met Him in Paris* was one of the better varieties, the sort of impertinent comedy which Hollywood, when it does well, does really well. Since it is a comedy, everything depends on the actors, the dialogue and the

ability of the director to keep twisting the tail of the plot. The director twists, the dialogue crackles, and the actors enjoy themselves enormously. Claudette Colbert hasn't had such a gay time since *Three Cornered Moon*.

Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge have a grand time in *Take My Tip*, impersonating head waiters, Brazilian countesses and Anglo-Indians. This is the best film they have made together. They are given the right sort of situations, there is a merciful absence of youthful lovers and neat direction by Herbert Mason. Another bright British farce was *Storm in a Teacup*. The joke about Mrs. Heggarty's dogs wears a little thin before the end, but there is some amusing satire at the expense of a pompous Scotsman, and a couple of brilliantly funny performances by Sara Allgood and Cecil Parker. The weak spot is the love interest. Vivien Leigh will have to get used to the fact that she is no longer at the R.A.D.A. and Rex Harrison will have to have a great deal more experience before he can afford to throw away his lines.

A British film was presented last quarter that will probably be preserved in museums, not because it is of outstanding merit filmically, but because it affords the public a unique opportunity of hearing a great pianist play superbly. *Moonlight Sonata* opens with twenty minutes straight playing by Paderewski, and he is at the piano several times more before the film ends. It would be ungracious to grumble about the poor quality of the film when Paderewski is not playing; we must be grateful that he is there at all.



The Marx Brothers, Margaret Dumont and Maureen O'Sullivan in *A Day at the Races*

M.G.M.



Gustav Knutt as *Der Ammenkoenig*, and Watte Gold as the Duchess

Courtesy Studio One

SLAPSTICK AND POLITICS

Continental Films of the Quarter Reviewed by ARTHUR VESSELO

THE DISTINCTION between light and heavy has always seemed to be a good deal more marked in films entering this country from the Continent than in those from other sources—chiefly, one presumes, because the public for Continental films is itself divided into two fairly rigid categories, the one, which feels that an outstanding film ought to be “gay” and “charming”, the other, more seriously-intentioned, which feels that a solemn and earnest state of mind is ultimately the only one worth cultivating. These opposing ideals correspond approximately, though naturally in a more genteel way, to the more vulgar urges for “a good laugh” and “a good cry”. The present quarter, at any rate, throws the antithesis into the most sharply-defined relief. The light films are apt to be so light as to despatch all inkling of logic finally to the winds; while the heavy ones take on a tense sociological aspect almost from the first credit-title.

Of the former class is Robert Siodmak's *Mister Flow*, a French comedy about an international crook who uses a simple young advocate as his dupe, until the dupe wakes up, outwits him, and goes off with his mistress. Entanglement is the keynote of much of the action; and a harum-scarum plot (relieved by no very striking originalities) is not made more comprehensible by an atmosphere which

at one moment wears the dress of comedy-melodrama, at another of screaming extravaganza. The comedy-maker can choose his own version of reality; but when he exaggerates or distorts, it is as well that he should do so in the same measure consistently, and not leave us confusedly wondering how far his perversions are intentional, how far not.

Perhaps in the original novel Mister Flow's international criminality was vital and convincing, but in the film it is the merest husk; and the more unhappily, that it is Louis Jouvet who fills the name-part, for not even a Roscius can make something out of very nearly nothing. But it was interesting to observe an audience's reaction to Jouvet's appearance on the screen: his face alone, even before he moved, caused delighted squirms and giggles—as if *La Kermesse Héroïque* had marked him down for ever as a funny man. If Pabst's version of *Mademoiselle Docteur* is ever shown in this country, it will be nice to see whether Jouvet is again greeted in the same way.

Fernand Gravey, who does the innocent advocate, is also one of the chief performers in *The Court Waltzes*—an *echter* Continental film, made in France by UFA, with a French-speaking cast but a German production-staff. The film increases its cosmopolitan range, and incidentally

kills two thematic cock-sparrows with one well-aimed beer-mug, by alternating the action between London and Vienna so as to bring together the youthful Queen Victoria (a romantic figure for Coronation Year) and the persons and melodies of Josef Lanner and a completely mythical Johann Strauss the elder—the last two presented as heated rivals, only reconciled in the closing shots. It may be worth repeating that everybody, all the time, speaks French.

The producers have evidently decided that the best way to treat the early Victorian period is in a spirit of crazy slapstick—take it or leave it. The English Court is the oddest place; and the Queen so unlike, that an English or American producer would have been rent apart for conceiving her so, whatever the circumstances. In point of fact, given the farcical premise, the caricature might perhaps be held not to matter—if it were only a little further removed from the simpering lay-figure of sentimental comedy. The film does, however, work up a considerable gusto, which occasionally makes the synthetic situations look nearly as good as new.

Both the above films end with a grotesque Lewis Carroll court-scene; the first introduced by a cause-list bearing the names of Shirley Temple and of Borotra v. von Cramm, the second with a presiding judge uttering fitly the tongue-twisting refrain "*C'est un procès sans précédent*". The psychological insistence in films on court-scene climaxes is sometimes like a hint, in elaborate parody, of the Day of Judgment—almost as if the ear were for an instant to discern, behind the chatter of the monkey, the faint but menacing thunder of the lion.

The seven-month success of *La Kermesse Héroïque* has been followed up at Studio One with a German film, *Der Ammenkoenig*, directed by Hans Steinhoff—selected, no doubt, because it contains the same sort of *risky* implications as its predecessor, even if it is rather more ponderous in tread. The film is a period-comedy based on a Max Dreyer play, and is concerned entirely with such topics as sex, virility, and the final triumphant defeat of moral bigotry, in a small German duchy two hundred years ago. At the beginning the prudes, in the shape of the reigning Duke's sister and his prim Minister of Morality, are in the ascendant, but they are routed at the close by a Goering-like blacksmith, declared to be immensely virile and seductive (and the elected "king" of a wet-nurses' guild in his village), who presents the Duke his master with a bastard heir, and by making the Duke think himself the father, causes him in joy to abolish an oppressive marriage-tax.

The main virtue of the piece (if "virtue" is quite the right word in the context) is that, having appointed itself a goal, it thereafter makes few pretences, so that its bawdy innuendoes, at their peak moments, are reminiscent of the witty frankness of Restoration comedy. On the other hand the film is slow-moving and rather obvious in patches, and the cutting throughout is extremely ragged. As for the sex-appeal, both of the Duchess and of that smugly-grinning man-mountain, the blacksmith, it is in both cases equally supposititious. A much better piece of acting comes from Richard Romanowsky as the diffident and dull-witted Duke.

At the least, *Der Ammenkoenig* is a relief from the morbid hysteria of so many recent German films. But with *Der Herrscher*, the first Emil Jannings importation for two years—and the first in our catalogue of heavies—the hysterics are back again at full volume. We start off

with a funeral and work our way through ravings, shoutings, and smashings to the final consummation. The piece is once more derivative, this time from a play, Gerhard Hauptmann's *Sonnenuntergang*; and it was also the German prize film for 1936, the latter point being easily explained by the amount of Nazi propaganda interwoven into the plot. The steel-master who is the central character symbolises the Fascist Dictator, whose commands must be dumbly administered though they lead to perdition. He is actually referred to as "Führer" of his workpeople and hailed by them with outstretched arm. When, after his wife's death, he shows a desire to marry an intelligent and sympathetic secretary, his children try to have him certified as insane; a deplorable and unfilial attitude, no doubt, but from some points of view, it must be confessed, not surprising, since in many ways his behaviour is just like that of an uncontrolled, ego-swollen maniac.

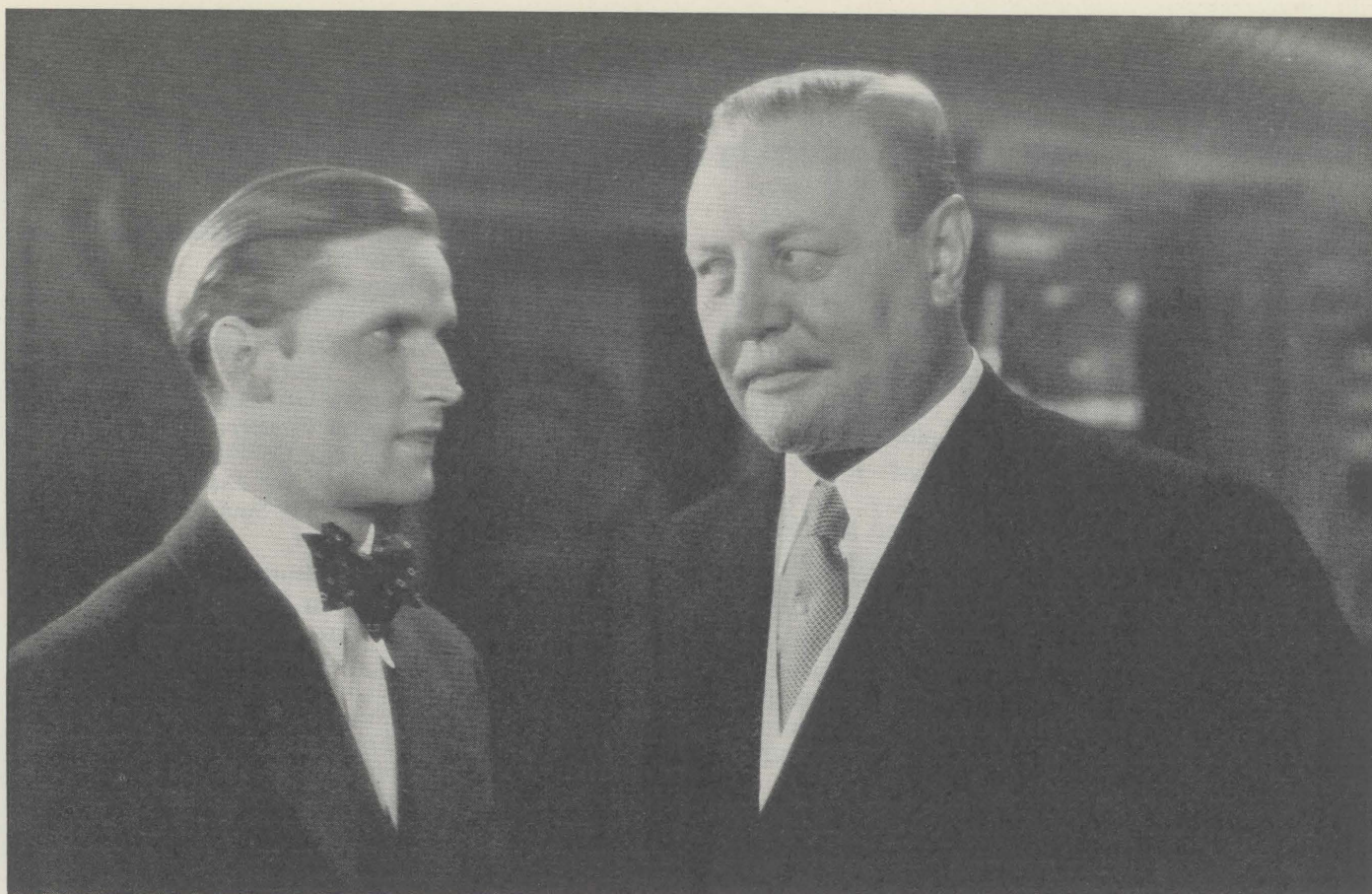
In several places one notes the same weakness of transition as in the previous film. Technically, however, certain passages have their impressive aspect. The atmosphere of the funeral scenes is realistic, and the shots and noises of the scenes inside the steel-works have all the subterranean volcanic force that is required of them. In fact, within the restricted confines of the Berkeley (the latest addition to London's specialist cinemas), the noises were often like a minor earthquake. These passages enter suitably into the spirit of moody violence which dominates the film. One is left with a feeling of contact with great mental travail and confusion—perhaps indeed with something approaching to madness.

The current Russian form of propaganda, as typified in *We From Kronstadt*—already reviewed here, but since exhibited publicly at the Academy—takes a distinctly different line. In the first place, it is uncloaked: in *We From Kronstadt* there are no red herrings and no half-concealed symbolisations, but the whole film is openly propaganda from start to finish. In the second place, there is a very evident temperamental difference: while the German film every so often flames and rages wildly, the Russian one is observed at all moments to be holding its powerful energies deliberately back—almost to the bursting-point.

Another example from the U.S.S.R. is *Generation of Conquerors*, shown by the Film Society. The ground covered is the period from 1896 to 1905, during which the rise of the Bolshevik party in Russia is traced, up to the slaughter of the workers on the notorious "Bloody Sunday" in 1905, and the brief but historic workers' revolt later in the year. The method of dramatisation employed pins the action to a group of young revolutionaries, whose fortunes are followed so as to reflect the political activities of the background. Much is said of Lenin and those about him, but they do not appear.

In various respects the film becomes practically a propagandist treatise; and the construction inevitably declines to the episodic. In the building-up, too, the scamped "Bloody Sunday" sequence is a notably weak link, for its importance is sufficient to have borne much more emphasis without at all detracting from the climax. At the same time—and despite an inability, as in *We From Kronstadt*, to make all the details of fighting convincing—general production-technique is uniformly good, better, indeed, than certain recent Soviet films might lead one to expect. But the most instructive points are the fundamental mood and the style adopted to express it.

In style, this film is a product no less of the modern



Hannes Stelzer and Emil Jannings in *Der Herrscher*

Tobis

American school than of the older Russian tradition; thus carrying forward a tendency which has for some while been partially visible. The editing is undoubtedly proficient, but it is not what our aesthetes describe as "montage", and there is no trace of a desire to do away with talk and let action speak for itself. Without dialogue, the film would be nearly meaningless.

The mood is extremely significant; seeking the past now, not alone with bitterness and violence as hitherto, but even with calm and an effort at genuine understanding. Here the Tsarist Russia of forty years ago is no longer portrayed purely in terms of the class-war, with every contrast thickly underlined, but almost as something to be reconstructed and exhibited dispassionately for itself. The explanation may be that the director, Vera Stroyeva, is a woman; but the shifted attitude of present-day Stalinism is as likely a cause.

Communist propaganda again, though from quite another angle, is Jean Renoir's *La Vie Est A Nous*, also shown by the Film Society. This is not the work of an authoritarian Government, ordering the services of its actors and technicians, and distributing its views to the (presumably) converted, but the voluntary collective product of burning partisans, still engaged at home in direct political strife with opposing groups on much the same footing as their own. There is no attempt at fictional form, no concealment of doctrinal purpose; and acted scenes are widely interspersed with others taken patently from reality. Here we see Fascism and Communism pitted against one another,

Fascism portrayed as reaction, hooliganism and destruction, Communism as the only hope of the future. Hitler barks and Mussolini struts, for the audience to hiss and boo; Soviet and French Communist leaders deliver monologues on the other side, for the audience to stamp and cheer.

The welding together of diverse elements is accomplished something in the manner of *Three Songs of Lenin*; and continuity of progress is maintained and invigorated by a furious sincerity which allows little slackening. But the peril of false emphasis is not wholly avoided, for at the end the bands of singing Communists on the skyline recall too easily the half-baked lyricism of similar passages in *San Francisco*: here, as there, they destroy conviction. The method of emotional attack must always run the danger of this kind of lapse; though indeed, quite apart from lapses, even the most passionate of *credos* cannot pretend to take the place of demonstration.

One can hardly fail to be moved by many of the items in such a film; but is it possible to remain unperturbed? There are still many who, whatever their sympathies, cannot be persuaded of the value of extremist dogma; and what are they to make of this conflict of warring fires? One fact is however clear. *Generation of Conquerors*, which deals with the past, might prove dull and monotonous to those not immediately interested; but *La Vie Est A Nous*, which is very much in the present, speaks plainly to all audiences, even though it was made primarily for French consumption. Politics nowadays—whether we will or no—are international.

NEW WORLDS AND THE OLD

Documentary Films of the Quarter reviewed by H. FORSYTH HARDY and WILLIAM FARR

WE LIVE IN TWO WORLDS (Great Britain)

Production: G.P.O. Film Unit, in conjunction with Pro Telephon, Zurich; John Grierson. *Direction:* Alberto Cavalcanti. *Scenario and Commentary:* J. B. Priestley. *Photography:* John Taylor. *Music:* Maurice Jaubert. *Editing:* R. McNaughten. *Length* 1,383 feet. *Distribution:* Associated British Film Distributors, A.T.P. House, 169 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE confined most of the G.P.O. Unit's film-making activities to this country, and part of the interest of *We Live in Two Worlds* and its attendant group of shorts is the approach to the life and problems of another nation. In contrast to the lyrical and poetic qualities of Basil Wright's West Indies films and *Song of Ceylon* (the most notable documentaries produced by the group outside Britain), Cavalcanti's films of Switzerland are lucid, prosaic and factual—coherent and concentrated vehicles for ideas. The theme dictates the treatment. Technique, though ample and efficient, is comparatively subdued.

We Live in Two Worlds is the centre-piece of the group: the ideas it expresses are to be found in different forms in the other films. We live in two worlds—the statement is general but the film exemplifies it with reference to Switzerland. Here is a small country, rich in tradition, confined both by the natural barriers of the Alps and the artificial barriers of customs, tariffs, and the significant armed forces of neighbouring countries; a people of sturdy independence and individuality whose industry and whose recreation are worn smooth by long custom. That is the national world. A rocket bearing a telephone line across a mountain gorge introduces the other world—the international world. Lines of communication, by road, rail, air, telephone, and wireless, break down the natural barriers. The Switzerland of this international world exploits both its limitations and its natural resources, the former by establishing a reputation for fine craftsmanship in manufacture, and the latter by using electric power generated from the rushing mountain waters for barter with adjacent states. It becomes, too, a country of travel and winter sports. This theme established, the film's mood changes and it concludes with an appealing exposition of the ideal of internationalism against a background of poetic visuals.

Technically, the film is comparatively straightforward, but, on this plane, immensely efficient. Cavalcanti's direction is fluently expressive, the photography has a full quality, and the film flows smoothly and evenly. Maurice Jaubert's music is a strengthening and enriching influence. At first it seems that J. B. Priestley's commentary, which has a curiously unsympathetic note, is going to overweight the film but, as it proceeds, accord is established between word and picture. The use of differently tinted stock for the three sequences is somewhat daring in these modern times but it is certainly effective.

Because of the scope of its idea and the quiet skill of its treatment, *We Live in Two Worlds* must be ranked among

the most notable contributions to British realist production.

MEN OF THE ALPS (Great Britain)

FOUR BARRIERS (Great Britain)

MESSAGE FROM GENEVA (Great Britain)

LINE TO THE TSCHIERVA HUT (Great Britain)

Production: G.P.O. Film Unit, in conjunction with Pro Telephon, Zurich; John Grierson and R. H. Watt. *Direction:* Alberto Cavalcanti. *Photography:* John Taylor. *Editing:* members of the G.P.O. Film Unit. *Lengths:* 950 feet; 732 feet; 792 feet; 868 feet. *Distribution:* G.P.O. Film Library, Imperial Institute, South Kensington.

MEN OF THE ALPS

This film develops, more leisurely and with greater detail, several of the ideas from *We Live in Two Worlds*. It depicts a humble, devout, hard-working peasantry, helping to maintain the independence of Switzerland by cultivating the difficult agricultural land of the hill slopes, and, in the meadows, raising cattle for the production of milk and cheese. The tourist industry is extensively cultivated. But more important is the development of skilled craftsmanship which makes Switzerland the supplier of fine goods to Europe. The greatest of the country's resources, its water power, was neglected until 30 years ago. Now it is used to secure raw material for heavy industries which are playing their part in Switzerland's struggle for economic survival. The theme is expressed in a series of compact and illuminating sequences, and the commentary, crowded as elsewhere in the group with facts, occasionally steps back to allow the picturesque visuals to speak for themselves. A neatly compiled and appealing film.

FOUR BARRIERS

There are, the film states, four barriers to Swiss progress. The first, lack of raw materials, concentrates industrial development on small fine goods calling for skilled craftsmanship. The second, the natural barrier of the mountains, is pierced by tunnels which make Switzerland the centre of the European railway system. The third barrier is political nationalism. With the world at war, Switzerland turns to her own resources and, from the mountains rushing with water, produces the electric power with which she can barter for raw materials. This barter power helps her to overcome the fourth barrier, economic nationalism. "This is the Switzerland of to-day," the film states, as the camera rests, surprisingly, on an iron foundry. The parts played by postal services, roads, and training for industry are briefly illustrated, and the film concludes with the hope that international co-operation will triumph over all difficulties. Much information is crowded into a short space, and the theme might have gained in clarity and the film in grip had the ideas been more fully developed. Too heavy an informative responsibility is thrown on the commentary. A diagram sequence is deftly handled and there is a dramatic note in a frontier scene.

MESSAGE FROM GENEVA

The film opens by showing the link by land-line between the B.B.C., in London and Geneva, referring in passing

to the network of land-lines across Europe. A fine piece of flowing montage transfers the scene to Geneva, "ancient city with a new political ideal." It is with the idealistic conception of Geneva as a "clearing-house for the agreements and disagreements of the world" that the film is concerned, rather than with its present position as a somewhat less vital factor in international affairs. Rapid reference by word and picture is made to the premises, the personalities, and the functions of the League, and the Palace of the Nations is shown with its offices, its postal services, and its facilities for journalists. A concluding sequence shows the short-wave broadcasting station with its announcements in different languages. The film gives a graphic picture of certain aspects of the organisation of the League of Nations without attempting to establish its present standing in a world dominated by political nationalism. Within this limit the treatment is clear and compelling.

LINE TO THE TSCHIERVA HUT

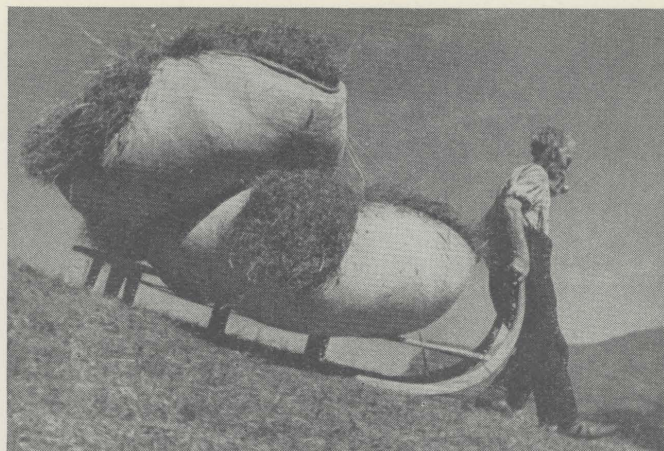
Tschierva Hut is a mountaineering outpost high in the Alps. A request from London establishes the fact that it has no telephone, and the film proceeds to illustrate how the defect is remedied. Poles are carried into the mountain area by cart, and when the road ends, by sure-footed mule. In a dramatic and exciting sequence, a rocket carries the telephone line across a gorge. Pegs are driven into the precipitous cliff-side. At length the line reaches the Tschierva Hut and communication is established with the outside world. The film is admirably simple and straightforward, and expresses its themes with neither complexities nor deviations. There is a hint of the special importance of telephone communication in these remote heights and the film gives an intriguing impression of mountain scenery. Attention is paid to significant detail, and the photography has the rich texture characteristic of the group. Slight in subject-matter, the film pleases for its terse lucidity.

H. F. H.

TO-DAY WE LIVE (Great Britain).

Production: Paul Rotha for Strand Film Company; in collaboration with National Council of Social Service. *Direction:* Ralph Bond and R. I. Grierson. *Scenario:* Stuart Legg. *Associate Producer:* Stanley Hawes. *Commentary* spoken by Howard Marshall. *Photography:* S. Onions and Paul Burnford. *Music:* Raymond Bennell. *Length* 2,060 feet. *Distribution:* Associated British Film Distributors Ltd., A.T.P. House, 169 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

In subject matter, production methods, and technical execution *To-day We Live* marks another stage in the maturity of the realist film and of Rotha's own work which his book, *Documentary Film*, had led us to hope for. Into its production has gone the collective skill and experience of the group of film makers whom Grierson has trained and encouraged during the past ten years, and lessons learned from the more recent *March of Time*. "The documentary method of expression," wrote Rotha, "must be the voice of the people speaking from the homes and factories and fields of the people. . . . Documentary will preserve its elements of camera mobility and flexibility of sound and visual images but, at the same time, broaden its human references." *To-day We Live* is a film of life in Britain. The machines and the rolling fields and clouds are still there but they are the background not the heroes. The heroes are Mrs. Haddleton and the women of South Cerney, Gloucestershire, who built a community centre for their village and



We Live In Two Worlds and *Tschierva Hut* G.P.O. Film Unit



To-day We Live

Strand

brought back to it pride and pleasure; and John Adlam and the unemployed men (nine out of ten), of Pentre, Rhondda, who turned their unwanted skill and energy into new channels and out of nothing created something, at any rate, which would make life better for themselves and their families and which, if prosperity ever returns to the Rhondda, will remain as something of permanent value that Pentre, like many another industrial town, lacked even in its days of prosperity.

That, and the activities of the National Council of Social Service in assisting the work, is the story in brief of *To-day We Live*. It is treated with sympathy and understanding, free from sentimentality or evasion, and thanks to the "actors" with a humour that is as refreshing as it is natural. The preface to the story, tracing the rise of industrialism through the Great War, to the economic depression of 1929 and on to to-day's boom, which leaves many industrial areas without a share in the revival of work, is established in a sequence which should serve as a classic example of economy, precision, and imagination to any film maker. The matching and interplay of picture, sound, and commentary demonstrate almost to perfection the capabilities of the film to expound, for any one to understand, a long and complicated series of events. No one who sees this film will easily forget the scenes of men—once miners—scrambling through clouds of coal dust on a slag heap to find scraps of coal for their fires. Nor the dying whine of the factory siren as prices fall on the City pages of newspapers during the first months of the depression.

When the film passes to the present day to show conditions in South Cerney and Pentre, the building of an occupational centre and the conversion of a barn into a community centre, and the activities carried on in both, the treatment is straightforward and essentially human. The enacted scenes are well directed, with little suggestion of artificiality, and the procession across the screen of real men and women behaving and talking naturally is exciting and moving. You will remember these faces. The treatment by alternating short sequences is sometimes confusing, the change in location, although indicated in the commentary, not becoming established until some seconds after the change; and at the end one aspect of the story—the depressed areas—assumes too great prominence and the theme of the film as a whole is lost. But these are faults more than excused by the experiment.

Two things remain to be mentioned: the quality of the commentary—not overloaded, well-phrased, and with an easy rhythm, and the contribution to the film made by Howard Marshall's speaking of it—with just the right intonation and emphasis and, throughout, obvious sympathy with his subject. And secondly, the method of production. The scenario was written by Stuart Legg; the Rhondda scenes which are largely concerned with men were directed by Ralph Bond and the Gloucestershire scenes, which are largely concerned with women, were directed by Miss R. I. Grierson. Stanley Hawes, as associate producer, spent his time between both places. Synchronised sound was shot in both places under Rotha's supervision. Meanwhile, the commentary was recorded in London from the scenario without reference to the visual material, and the non-synchronised sound was assembled. All the material was then taken over by Rotha who cut the film. The result shows what can be achieved by this method and reflects credit on the skill of the individuals and the imagination of Strand Films.

W. F.

THE GAP (Great Britain).

Production: G.B. Instructional. *Direction:* Donald Carter. *Assistant Director:* J. L. Bacon. *Photography:* George Pocknall. *Art Direction:* F. N. Bush. *Dialogue:* E. V. H. Emmett. *Music:* Louis Levy. *Sound:* John Douglas. *Length* 3,580 feet. *Distribution:* 35mm. General Film Distributors, 127 Wardour Street, London, W.1. 16 mm. G.B. Equipments, Film House, Wardour Street, London, W.1.

Produced in collaboration with the Army and Air Councils, *The Gap* makes an appeal for more Territorials to man England's ground defences against aerial attack. The film opens on a quiet academic note with classes of Territorials being instructed in the lay-out of England's defences and in the manipulation of searchlights, anti-aircraft guns, etc. It then passes to a reconstruction of how the defence plans would work in the event of an aerial attack launched—as is likely—without a formal declaration of war, and culminates in a devastating bombardment of London. "All that we can hope for now," we are told, "is to catch them on the way back." Small comfort this for the men, women and children who, choking with gas, flee from their burning homes, leaving behind them those who no longer need comfort or defence. BUT—this happened, says the film, because there was a Gap in the ground defences. YOU can close that Gap and protect your wife, your children, and your home from the things to come, from Guernica's fate.

If as the film ends you rise from your comfortable seat, and going to the recruiting desk in the cinema foyer enlist in the Territorial Army, the film will have achieved its object. But if it only interests you as the destruction of Everytown in *Things to Come*, the Hendon Air Pageant, or, perhaps even, the newsreel of devastated Guernica interested you, the film will have failed. Yet it seems that this might happen. Not because the film is not well made. Like most productions from this company it is well photographed (some of the night scenes particularly), the acted scenes and the destructions are convincingly acted and faked, and the direction is efficient. But as a propaganda film it says too much and, at the same time, too little. Those who are content to accept the premises of the film and not ask questions will be flattered at having been taken into the counsels of those organising our defences and will be willing to do their bit. But even to make these do something *now* the film is

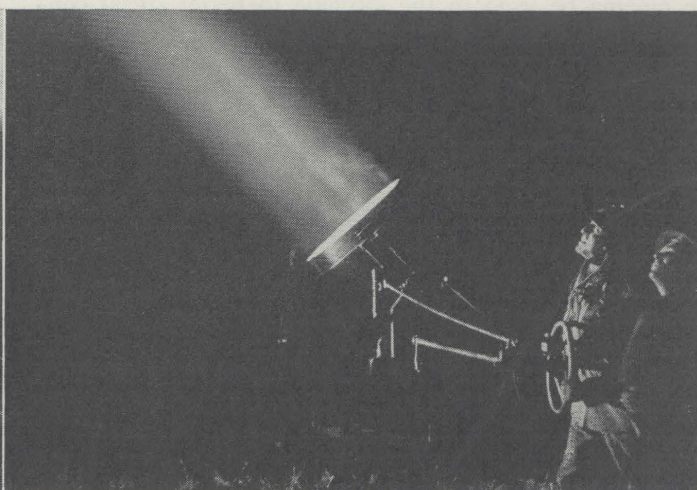
too restrained. No one wants to see real frightfulness on the screen, but the absence of it in this film detracts from its propaganda efficiency and to some may suggest that the worst has been purposely withheld, and that this bit which they are being asked to do will not prevent the horrors which all of us dread. For them touches of "Army humour", official careworn earnestness, and pious asides about efforts to avert hostilities will not serve as sops.

The statement that the bombers will always get through—gap or no gap—has been made too often (and by men of all political affiliations) to be brushed aside with a white feather as it is in the opening sequence and the development of the film does nothing to allay this fear which must be in the mind of everyone who sees it. Again, why is it that while the Central Control Room for defence is said to be bomb- and gas-proof and the Territorials manning the defences are shown in steel helmets, the civilian observers and the police are shown with no helmets or gas masks, and the homes of London and their occupants are shown without any defences against gas? Even masks are only handed out after the gas bombs have been dropped. And should not the evacuation of women and children from London form part of the defence scheme? Or again, is there any difference between the men bombing London who are apostrophised as "Swine" by an old woman and asked by another, "What have we done to them?", and the Territorial who exclaims "That's good shooting," and another who says that he would give a year's pay to look up and see what's going on, as they hunt the bombers through the air with anti-aircraft shells and searchlights? But more fundamental than these is the implied ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the regular Army and Air forces to defend this country. Everything depends apparently on deep-sea trawlers spotting the incoming raid, civilian observer posts, volunteer decontamination squads, Territorial guns and searchlights. One Gap in their ranks, we are shown, results in the regular Air Force being completely unable to prevent the bombing of London. Is this the true situation? If so, then it appears that the butchers, the bakers, and the candlestick makers, instead of being protected in order that they may serve the community, must themselves protect it, while, for so must we conclude, the main part of the regular forces is engaged—elsewhere. If this is so, there are indeed gaps in our defences and not only those on which this film concentrates.

W. F.



Territorial ground defences from *The Gap*



G.B. Instructional

BOOK REVIEWS

THE MOVIES AND REALITY

PAUL ROTH Reviews *Footnotes to the Film and Cinema Survey*

EACH OF these two books has the other's title and the other's price.* With omissions and additions, Mr. Davy's *Footnotes* might have been an excellent survey, while the observations of Messrs. Herring and Bower and Miss Bryher merit no better title than footnotes. Whatever its faults, Mr. Davy's job lot is, to my mind, the most interesting book on the film this year. No one understanding the views expressed by Messrs. John Grierson, Alistair Cooke and Graham Greene will bother to answer Mr. Davy's question "Are Films Worth While?" In fact, with his long excerpts from Mrs. Woolf's *The Years* and his remarkable discovery that the film is hampered by being likened to the stage-play, Mr. Davy's contribution is the weakest thing in the book.

I am surprised at Mr. Davy. He often writes intelligent movie notes in *The Yorkshire Post*. But in this book, beyond being Editor, he quite fails to add up the sum which the seventeen essays present. I have seldom read anyone more ambiguous on movie's social purpose. Having decried those who "are eager to seize hold of the cinema and use it for the one task which appears to them important—the task of promoting social revolution," he then says, four pages later, "It is because the cinema is thus endowed with a power of vigorous poetic language that it can afford to take its subject-matter from the most realistic aspects of daily life." He thus attacks those very people, the social reformers, for doing precisely what he defines as the purpose of the film. Listen further on this matter of social purpose: "This is what the social reformer must ask of the artist, and all that he may ask—that the artist should devote his heart and soul to doing his best work, in freedom; and what is asked of him in return by the artist is that he should devote himself heart and soul to removing some of the social obstacles—there are plenty of them in our time—which prevent the artist's best work from getting freely done. Perhaps (adds Mr. Davy naïvely) this will not satisfy the social revolutionaries, but it is all I can say here, briefly, on a difficult subject." In other words, says Mr. Davy, the artist in cinema must not be a social reformer, nor should the cinema be used in the struggle to better social conditions. With this, of course, we eliminate from movie discussion and movie history the work of Pabst, the Russians, some of Milestone and some of Clair, the new American sociological school, and all the documentary people. Mr. Davy is welcome to what is left.

Mr. Edward Upward, who is not so tongue-tied as Mr. Davy, puts the matter well in the case of literature.† "A writer of to-day," he says, "who wishes to produce the best work that he is capable of producing, must first of all become a socialist in his practical life, must go over to the progressive side of the class conflict"; otherwise, "the only alternative for him is, as the reactionary class to which he clings plunges ever deeper into failure, to write books which increasingly distort reality and which, translated back into

practice, lead to even greater failure. Failing to tell the truth about the major realities, he will try to tell the truth about dreams or words or the past. . . ." What Mr. Upward says of writers is equally true of the artist in movie. I suggest to Mr. Davy that a film is good if, and only if, it represents the fundamental realities of to-day. And a fundamental reality of to-day is the urgent need for social reform. No artist in movie can afford to ignore social realities. Maybe that is what Mr. Basil Dean has in his mind when he writes, "Deep in the life of every nation lies the inexhaustible material with which that nation's films should be written and acted."

Happily, other contributors to this book do not share their editor's reactionary views. Mr. John Grierson, for example, in an article which must rank as one of the best, if not the best, that he has written, describes the struggle for realism: "To exploit the powers of natural observation; to build a picture of reality; to bring the cinema to its destiny as a social commentator, inspirator and art; to make it bite into the time and, from its independent vantage, contribute to the articulation of the time—that, one may imagine, has been difficult in the circumstances." (The italics are mine.) How does Mr. Davy reconcile this purpose of cinema with his view of the social reformer divorced from the artist?

Mr. Graham Greene, who writes on *Subjects and Stories*, recognises that the cinema's function is to show "Life as it is; life as it ought to be" and also defines the barriers to this portrayal of reality. "No film which held the aged provincial J.P.'s up to criticism or which described the conditions in the punishment cells at Maidstone would be allowed." At the close of his essay Mr. Davy himself, despite what he has just said about social reformers, is forced to admit the importance of social reality on the screen, and in his only worthwhile paragraph, deals honestly with censorship. "The present Censor, Lord Tyrrell, is interpreting correctly an influential body of conservative opinion, both inside and outside the film trade, when he urges the cinema to keep away from anything controversial, for this body of opinion is afraid of the cinema's powers of vivid realism, and wants it to continue its profitable and soothing work of providing an escape from harsh facts into a world of pretty fancies." Well said, Mr. Davy, but in your anxiety to divorce the social reformer from the movie maker, you yourself come close to Lord Tyrrell.

The latter and his mysterious confrères emerge as the real villains of this book. In chapter after chapter we read of the threat to freedom that looms behind the lovely facade and pretty window boxes of Carlyle House. Mr. Forsyth Hardy, in his excellent article on Film Societies, reminds us again of Lord Tyrrell's advice that "cinema needs continued repression of controversy in order to stave off disaster." He continues to describe how the Board of Censors has expanded far beyond the scope of its original terms of constitution. He implies that it is the Board of Censors which prevents British films from dealing with real life, although he does not go so far as to expose the interests, both political and economic, for which the Board

**Footnotes to the Film*. Edited by Charles Davy. Lovat Dickson. 18s. *Cinema Survey*. Robert Herring, Bryher and Dallas Bower. Brendin Publishing Co. 1s.

†*The Mind in Chains* (Muller) 1937. 6s. net.

acts. But it is left to Mr. Grierson to add the most withering comment on censorship: "... poor dear censor Wilkinson with his Blake's poetry and his beloved pre-Raphaelities, has, in the jungle of Wardour Street, the strength of ten. Great figure he is, for on his charming shoulders he carries the burden of our servility and our shame. Created by the Trade as an image of gratuitous fright, it is not surprising that his slogan of 'No Controversy'—which to philosophy and all the world is 'No Reality'—is abjectly obeyed."

Let us turn to lighter things. Colour being in the air and on the schedule, Mr. Paul Nash's forthright article comes opportunely. At last someone has told the truth, has put into cold print what so many of us are thinking about colour: "At present, so far as I can discover, the use of imagination and the operation of the technical processes in colour cinematography have never coincided." With which Mr. Nash proceeds to destroy that appalling film *Wings of the Morning*. He is the first person to put his finger on the weak spots of the colour film: "Figures of unnatural colour force, but not quite sufficiently articulated in drawing, move about in landscape where form, literally, has no definition and, in the near middle distance, gives up the pretence altogether and becomes simply blurred" and "It (colour) fails to reinforce form." To which, I would add, colour obliterates movement—the keystone of the movie medium.

And now what I learnt from this book. I learnt from Mr. Korda, speaking on behalf of the British film trade, that "we have nothing to despair of or feel ashamed about in our record." I learnt, for the first time, from Miss Elizabeth Bowen, that Russian films are "noble." I learnt, with satisfaction, from Mr. Sidney Bernstein that "the popularity of realist films is growing." I learnt, with surprise, from Mr. Alistair Cooke, that the Russian film directors were "very explicit in their writing," and that "a film critic is a sort of cross-breed between a dramatic critic and a motor correspondent." And from Mr. Lambert I was at last glad to hear the confession that the British Film Institute "has to execute a perpetual tight-rope dance in order to avoid treading on the corns of this minority," by which minority he means the film trade governors on the Board. I was grateful for Mr. Maurice Kann's shrewd and accurate summary of the commercial relations between British and American films; and for M. Cavalcanti's admirable chapter on Comedy, which leads us to believe that the social reformers might do worse than study humour, as a mode of tactics.

I spoke of omissions. There are such good articles in this book that, with better editorship, some of the less worthwhile might have been left out or better writers found. Mr. Robert Donat is merely flippant and personal on *Acting*, where either Mr. Fritz Kortner or Mr. Laughton would have said something valuable. The art of direction is too important for us to be amused by Mr. Hitchcock's personal problems or such ingenuous remarks on editing as, "All that has to be done is to cut away irrelevancies and see that the finished film is an accurate rendering of the scenario." Perhaps Mr. Graham Greene is right when he says, "Even a man of the stature of Hitchcock to-day is more hampered by his personality than he will ever know." As for additions, a contribution from a hard-boiled trade paper critic and something intelligent about news-reel possibilities, together with a note from Miss Iris Barry about the valuable historical work now being done by the Film Library at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, would have given this

book an authority, balance and breadth which would have placed it to the forefront of our library shelf.

In *Cinema Survey* Mr. Herring writes on "art and entertainment" and makes the old plea for special films for special audiences. Mr. Dallas Bower's attack on documentary would be fine if his facts were right. To his statement that "you rarely see a genuine documentary film in a popular cinema hall" I refer him to the booking lists on, say, *Cover to Cover*, *Night Mail* and *Airport*. In particular, I wish he had been my companion at the big Astoria in a popular seaside resort on Easter Monday last when a well-known documentary was screened. To his comment that "the miner does not want to see his own backyard," I reply that *Shipyards* was most popular in shipbuilding districts and that *Kameradschaft* did well in South Wales. Finally, the reason why documentary makers make the films they do is a matter which, I should have thought, Mr. Dallas Bower, who once made a documentary himself, would have known.

ELEPHANT DANCE. Frances H. Flaherty. Faber. 12s. 6d.

A great many books derive from films nowadays, the new world thus redressing the balance of the old, but as a rule they do not provide very good reading matter. Too obviously they reflect nothing but a desire to cash in on a film success. Mrs. Flaherty's is in a different category because it is not a re-hash of the film story, but the story of how the film itself was made. We have a picture of its original conception, its moulding, remoulding and tempering by Korda and Flaherty, and finally of the shooting itself in India, the film still maturing under the impact of the jungle. I don't know how interesting much of this would be to a reader who was in the industry. To an ordinary film-goer it is absorbing. In the same way I can imagine that the pukka shikari and full-blown Anglo-Indian will probably laugh a bit at the author's solecisms and enthusiasms about the Indian scene. To me that does not detract from the book at all. You feel it is absolutely sincere. Just because it is all fresh and exciting to the Flaherty's, they could make it fresh and exciting to the spectator.

The photographs are undoubtedly superb; and this reminds me that we in the book trade have indeed to be grateful to the film men for setting a new standard of photographic illustration. The film, being dependent, fortunately, entirely on the picture at the outset, brought photography to a pitch of technical excellence hitherto undreamt of. It was only natural that in the selection of stills to illustrate a book, the same vision should be brought into play. Gradually the more imaginative and dramatic picture has been accepted by book men, and the standard of illustration demanded by explorers and hunters has risen accordingly. It is necessary to own that the first steps were taken abroad, our own book trade being very conservative. Fortunately, too, it has coincided with considerable technical improvements in the process of photogravure, which hitherto was not very advanced in England. The Flaherty's illustrations are as good in selection and reproduction as anything I have seen.

NOEL CARRINGTON

THE AMERICAN FILM. Eric H. Rideout. Mitre Press. 15s.

The blurb on the dust-cover tells us that this is the first attempt made in England at a critical appreciation of the achievements of the American commercial film. "Collecting and analysing the work of some sixty directors, illustrating by numerous plates the work of outstanding cameramen,

art directors and dress designers, giving examples of the work of scenario writers. Mr. Rideout develops the importance of the technical experts of Hollywood whose names go so swiftly by in credit titles."

All of which sounds very interesting. The book itself, unfortunately, is dull—not dull, like some books on films, because of abstruseness of argument or preciousness of terminology, but dull because of inadequate assimilation of material, confused thinking, poor arrangement, divagations of aim, and sheer incompetence of writing.

Perhaps the best way to convey the generous quality of Mr. Rideout's critical faculty will be to set forth a number of his judgments. Thus, of *Marie Galante* he writes: "In every way a perfect production . . . a masterpiece . . . only to be described in superlatives . . . certainly one of the finest films in the years under review" (just what years these are Mr. Rideout nowhere thinks to tell us). Of *Pursuit of Happiness*: "an exceedingly distinguished production, unusual and clever." Of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*: "Fredric March as Browning gave quite the liveliest performance of his career. Miss Shearer was in her element." Of *The Devil is a Woman*: "One of the finest artistic achievements of the modern cinema." Of *Remember Last Night*: "Too clever by far for mass appeal . . . penetrating satire . . . as bitterly refreshing as an olive." Of *Imitation of Life*: "One of the finest screen dramas of American life yet made." Of *The Captain Hates the Sea*: "In every sense an unusual film; well worth reviving for appreciative audiences." Of *Anything Goes*: "Admirable piece of light entertainment . . . catchy tunes delightfully rendered by Mr. Bing Crosby and Miss Ethel Merman." Of *Becky Sharp*: "A particularly fine example of how adaptation from a novel should be done . . . The climax of the film is one of the unforgettable scenes in the history of cinema." (This from a writer who says that unfortunately he has "only the dimmest recollection of Mamoulian's *City Streets*!")

Mr. Rideout surveys the films—or such films as he himself has seen—of sixty directors, great and small, but in few instances does he succeed in drawing from the films any real conclusions about the men who made them, and even when he does the conclusions might as often as not be applied to some other director without anyone being the wiser. Sometimes Mr. Rideout gives up without an effort, as when he writes of Lubitsch, "There is little need to labour the account of his virtues as a director. His versatility has repeatedly been discussed and admired."

The continuity in these sections is haphazard, a chance remark leading from one director to another entirely dissimilar, almost in "Cinemazine" style. Neither is a sense of proportion very marked. *Fury* gets 10 (relatively apathetic) lines; *Black Fury* gets 48. Dieterle's *Lawyer Man* gets 12 lines; his *Pasteur* gets one. Indeed few people reading Mr. Rideout would emerge with any clear idea of what were the really important films and who were the really important directors of recent years.

Mr. Rideout's obvious preoccupation with the visual composition of film leads one to expect more than one finds in the chapter devoted to the Cameraman. Gregg Toland is the only cameraman whose work is analysed (*i.e.* eulogised); only six other names are mentioned. The section on Art Direction mentions four men (discussing none), and we hear of only two dress designers and one make-up man. The section on sound opens well and then peters out into a discussion of screen "musicals." A chapter on The Story repudiates the view that "there is much ground for com-

plaint of the sameness or of the unimportance of the story in the modern American sound film."

The book contains—illogically—two chapters on England, one describing recent productions, the other conditions of exhibition. Apart from *Turn of the Tide* all the English films considered are productions of London Films. A quarter of the space goes to *Men Are Not Gods*: it achieves 40 lines; *Rembrandt* earns only eight. But the whole chapter is a credit to Korda's publicity men.

ERNEST DYER

CONTINUITY GIRL. Martha Robinson. *Robert Hale*. 7s. 6d.

In the preface to this chronicle of her adventures as a continuity girl in the pandemonium that was a film studio, Martha Robinson assures us that such conditions now exist only in the independent "mushroom" companies. In the older companies, the job is "dull and entirely mechanical," compensated for by the glamour of studio life, the sensation of being part of a creative unit. Miss Robinson's life needed no such compensation. For 250 pages she records her personal impressions of an industry apparently subject to every sort of disaster, and filled with charming but irrational individuals. Appointed secretary to the studio supervisor, she worked as continuity girl for some half-dozen productions, and gives a detailed account of her life during the time: studio organisation, the jobs from director to clapper boy, the people who occupied them, her work, the films themselves, and the demands the life made on its victims. The book is lively reading; there are amusing anecdotes of actors, studio personnel and production misadventures. The subject is a light one for a whole book and there is some repetition as well as a certain amount of Miss Robinson's private life which, though entertaining, is out of place. The book is most revealing and, by inference, throws some light on the financial troubles of the industry (though these are never mentioned). It should be an amusing warning to young men and women contemplating entering the studios. It is illustrated by stills of productions mentioned in the text.

HELEN FARR

HOW TO WRITE A MOVIE. Arthur L. Gale. *Pitman*. 7s. 6d.

The last sentence of an author's special note at the beginning of this book reads: "This book will not help anybody to sell an unpublished story or scenario to Hollywood studios." After reading "get-rich-quick" books on scenario writing *ad nauseum*, such a frank confession is about as refreshing as *How to Write a Movie* itself, which, though supposed to be a treatise on how to write scenarios for travel, industrial, publicity and amateur films, is for the most part, a brilliantly written introduction to the whole art of making movies, and is a fitting companion to the author's previous book, *Making Better Movies*, written in collaboration with Russell Holslag.

Mr. Gale's first three chapters are concerned with the fundamental principles of how to construct a film on paper. The fourth and fifth, though titled "Photoplay Plots" and "Dramatic Scenarios," contain more information of use to the free lance travel and industrial cameraman than to amateur movie makers bent on aping the professional studios. The same remarks could be made about Chapter vi which deals with adding sound to silent films, either by post synchronising or by using twin turntables and non-synchronised gramophone records.

The next three chapters cover "Short Subjects with Sound," "The Talking Photoplay" and "Filming in Colour." The first two of these deal mainly with making films on

single system sound cameras (*i.e.* cameras which record both sound and picture on one filmstrip at a single operation) and the latter with Kodachrome. These chapters appear to have been written almost entirely for the amateur and though much of what Mr. Gale suggests is no doubt sensible enough, such as his warning against the excessive use of commentary or the dangers of splicing an over-exposed colour shot next to an under-exposed one, such advice would seem to be too obvious to justify the labour of writing some 50 pages about it.

This is not to suggest that these last three chapters contain *nothing* of interest or value. They do. But there is not nearly so much careful fundamental reasoning in them as there is in the first six.

On the whole this is a good book and, so far as the writer is aware, it is the first to be published on writing for the non-theatrical screen. Anyone interested in non-theatrical movies will find it well worth reading.

P. A. LE NEVE FOSTER

CONTROLLED READING. Earl A. Taylor. *University of Chicago Press. Cambridge University Press (for Great Britain and Ireland)*. 16s.

The problems with which this book deals do not greatly pre-occupy the mind of the average teacher outside America. We, in this country, take what must seem to the Americans a somewhat over-simplified view of the processes involved in the act of reading. Even we are bound to admit two logically distinct phases—the reception of impressions by the brain and the subsequent interpretation of these impressions. But we admit of no subtler sub-division of the first process than the difference between the perception of those whose eyes have definite defects calling for the help of the oculist, and that of the remainder whom we class as normal. American research, however, has made it clear that the class of reader whom we describe as normal really comprises individuals whose perceptive skill, if one may so describe it, differs in a very marked degree. We are apt to assume that a slow reader is simply a slow understander. The American investigators challenge this assumption. Their investigations go to show that sheer clumsiness in the use of the eyes may be the root of the trouble and eye-drill, not spectacles, the remedy.

The instrument which has enabled these conclusions to be reached is a highly-specialised camera, designed to record the movements of the eyes. Skilful eyes traverse the page in unison with a regular sweep reminiscent of the saw-tooth scanning motion of the television beam. They should pause only three or four times per line and never fumble to-and-fro along the line. Unskilful eyes get out of step with each other, pause too often and wander about aimlessly. Fig. 1 (p. 112) shows the eye-record of a good reader and Fig. 2 is a typical bad eye-record (p. 113). The graph is traced by reflecting a spot of light from each eye on to a continuously moving strip of sensitive film. This method, it may be recalled, was one of the earliest to be employed in motion-record study, going back as far as the work of Marey, in France, some fifty years ago. It is interesting that it should have been revived in connection with a field of research which seems likely to have far-reaching results in the future.

H. D. WALEY.

PHOTOGRAPHY, 1839-1937. Museum of Modern Art, New York. \$3.00.

This is the illustrated catalogue of the 1937 Exhibition of Photography which was held at the Museum of Modern

Art, New York, in 1937. The catalogue contains an extremely valuable foreword on the historical, æsthetic and technical aspects of photography by Beaumont Newhall, and a short bibliography. Ninety-five illustrations of selected exhibits, beautifully reproduced, give the catalogue a strong appeal to the eye as well as to the mind. Mr. Newhall makes some interesting comments on the relationship between still photography and cinematography. "The influence of cinematography on still photography is deeply felt. The present popularity of the miniature camera is due to the moving pictures. Another striking example of their influence is the emphasis placed on lay-out in thousands of publications. Photographs are arranged in sequence to give an impression of action by continuity of space, or the effect of one picture is heightened by the close juxtaposition of another. Photographs of portions of objects (close-ups) were most uncommon before the moving picture. The modern use of panchromatic material, giving dark skies, was fostered by Hollywood."

It is clear from the catalogue that the range and quality of the Exhibition must have been remarkable. H. D. W.

FILM PUBLICITY, by Sydney Box, with an introduction by Sydney Carroll. Lovat Dickson. 3s. 6d.

This handbook will be useful to those who have products or ideas which they wish to publicise and are unfamiliar with the use of films as an advertising medium. Various types of publicity films and various methods of distribution are described and discussed. An example is given of a "synopsis" and a "treatment"—the former being the rough outline of a film's content and the latter the resolution of the story into terms of film footage, sound-track, and picture. To assist in the visualisation of film-making's difficulties, an imaginary calendar describes a film's progress in detail from the day when it is ordered by the sponsor to the day when he views it in the film producer's private theatre.

H. D. W.

THE COMPLETE PROJECTIONIST. R. Howard Cricks, F.R.P.S. 2nd edition. *Odhams Press*. 3s. 6d.

This is a new and revised edition of an extremely useful handbook which first appeared in 1933. The latest developments in sound-reproduction are now fully described, and chapters have been added on television, colour, and sub-standard film. This is a book which should be studied by all those who take a practical or theoretical interest in projection, and it will also be found useful as a book of reference for technical data.

H. D. W.

TELEVISION, Science Museum, South Kensington. *H.M. Stationery Office*. 6d.

In connection with the current Television Exhibition at South Kensington, this moderately priced catalogue has been issued. It will be found very valuable, not only by visitors to the Exhibition, but also by all persons anxious to obtain a clear but brief statement of the principles according to which Television is, at present, being carried on in this country. Concise technical particulars, simple diagrams and bibliographical notes are included. Anyone with a clear grasp of the principles of radio transmission will be well able to follow the technical terminology, which is necessarily involved in these descriptions.

Perhaps it may be permissible to express a hope that the Museum will, in the near future, see its way to compiling a similar guide to the principles and practice of cinematography.

H. D. W.

PROJECTORS FOR THE SCHOOLS

B.F.I. CENSUS

THERE ARE even less projectors being used in schools in this country than had been commonly assumed. This is revealed by the enquiry which the British Film Institute has been making throughout England, Scotland and Wales during the last three months. A questionnaire was sent to the 351 local education authorities and to 720 Secondary and Preparatory Schools which are recognised by the Board of Education as efficient but which do not receive grants from the Board and do not, therefore, come under the jurisdiction of the local education authorities.

Replies have now been received from 282 local education authorities; of these 157 report projectors in their areas and the rest, 126, report none. Replies have also been received from 209 of the preparatory and secondary schools that were written to individually; of these 136 have replied that they own projectors. Replies have still not been received from 69 local education authorities or from 511 of the schools, but it now seems probable that most of those who have not replied have not done so because they have nothing to report. At the same time it has been suggested by some local education authorities themselves that there are a number of schools equipped with, or having the use of, projectors, particulars and details of which are not known to the local education authorities concerned, and which could not, therefore, be included in the replies returned to the Institute. But again, it is unlikely that this number will greatly increase the totals given below.

It appears, therefore, that to-day there are only 812 projectors being used for educational purposes in schools and similar institutions and by local education authorities. There are approximately 32,000 schools and colleges in England, Scotland and Wales. The distribution of these among the various types of schools and the numbers of each type of projector are shown in the table below.

Comparative figures known for other countries are as follows: in Germany 17,000 out of 55,000 schools are equipped with projectors; France 9,400 projectors; U.S.A. 10,097 projectors, 82,297 schools; and in Hungary 400 out of 600 secondary schools are equipped with projectors.

BOARD OF EDUCATION AND GRANTS FOR EQUIPMENT

"There is no question," said Mr. Kenneth Lindsay Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, in the House of Commons on June 14th, "that the Board wishes to see a wider use made of the film in schools." Mr. Lindsay was replying to Mr. Morgan Jones who, during the debate on the Board of Education Estimates, had drawn attention to the small number of projectors in use in schools in this country and had appealed to the Parliamentary Secretary "to invite his officials to make a special study of the matter with a view to giving direct assistance for the provision of films in schools." Mr. Lindsay reminded the House that, as he had stated on June 1st, in reply to Sir William Brass, M.P., the Board is willing to regard the provision of cinematograph equipment in public elementary schools as an educational development (rather than as ordinary equipment). Consequently, so long as Articles 3 (i), 3 (iii) 3 (iv) of the Elementary Education Grant Regulations remain in force such expenditure will be aided by a 50 per cent grant instead of 20 per cent. Fifty per cent grant is also made, under the Higher Education Grant Regulations, towards expenditure incurred by local education authorities on the provision of cinematograph equipment for secondary and technical schools.

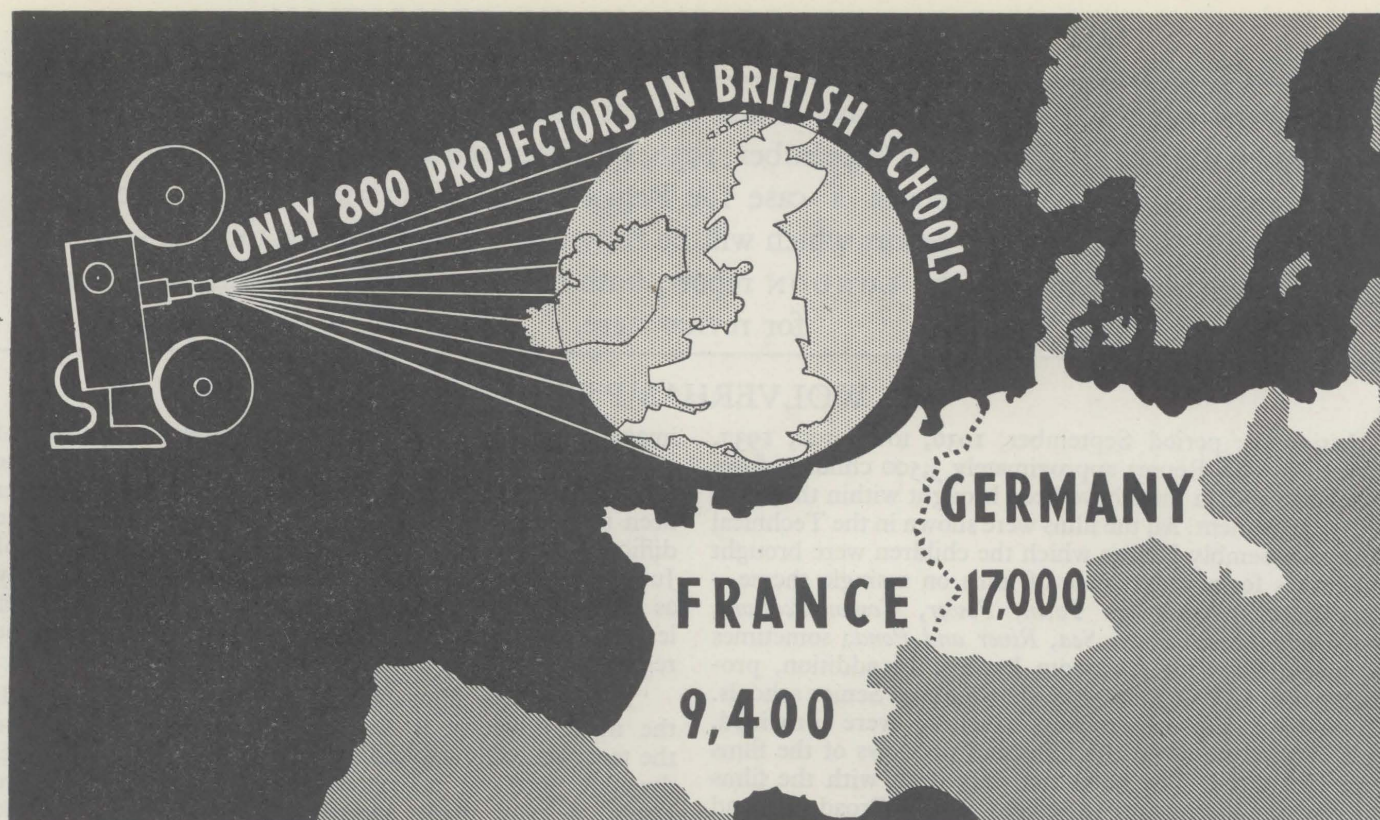
This announcement, which also applies to wireless equipment for schools, should promote the more rapid equipment of elementary schools and local education committees will, no doubt, hasten to budget for equipping schools with projectors while they can benefit under the operation of the Articles referred to.

On July 26th, Mr. Kenneth Lindsay opened the third London Film School for teachers, organised by the British Film Institute and the Educational Handwork Association.

BOARD OF EDUCATION COURSE FOR TEACHERS

A short course on Visual Aids, organised by the Board of Education, was held at Bristol from July 14th to July 21st and was attended by thirty teachers nominated by local education authorities. The object of the course was to give those attending comprehensive and intensive instruction

	England and Wales							Scotland							Grand Totals
	9.5mm	16mm. silent	9.5 & 16mm.	16mm. sound	35mm. silent	35mm. sound	Totals	9.5mm	16mm. silent	9.5 & 16mm.	16mm. sound	35mm. silent	35mm. sound	Totals	
Preparatory, Primary and Senior Elementary Schools	117	154	58	42	50	7	428	7	72	3	—	—	—	82	510
Central and Secondary Schools	12	49	8	30	16	8	123	5	24	3	3	1	—	36	159
Technical Colleges, Universities, etc.	1	35	3	4	12	3	58	—	5	—	3	3	—	11	69
L.E.A.'s for general use	1	19	7	18	1	—	48	5	17	4	—	—	—	26	74
Totals	131	257	77	95	79	18	657	17	118	10	6	4	—	155	812



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so that they might be able to instruct and advise teachers in their own areas. This method of instructing a few selected teachers, who, in their turn, can instruct others, has been successfully tried out in Birmingham under the guidance of Mr. H. E. Dance, H.M.I., who was in charge of the Bristol course, and in Glasgow by the Scottish Educational Film Association. Lectures and demonstrations on the elements of projection were given each day, and full opportunity was allowed for those attending to learn to handle various types of projectors. Mr. H. D. Waley, Technical Officer of the British Film Institute, was in charge of this part of the work, assisted by Mr. Harry Walden, A.R.P.S. Subjects for special lectures and demonstrations included: Daylight Projection; Micro-Projector and Photo-micrography; Planning Schools with reference to the Use of Visual Aids; Regional Organisation of Visual Aids; Organisation of local courses of instruction for teachers; Planning an Educational Film; and Essentials for the Amateur Film Maker. Visiting lecturers included Mr. E. G. Savage, Senior Chief Inspector, Mr. R. M. Allardyce, Mr. P. Frost Smith, H.M.I., Miss Mary Field and Mr. Max Kaufmann. 16 mm. educational films selected from twelve film libraries were shown during the course.

L.E.A.'S INFORMAL CONFERENCE

Sixteen Directors of Education, three officers of the Board of Education and two officers of the Film Institute met in informal conference at the end of June in order to exchange views and ideas. All the Directors present were keenly interested in the use of the film in education, for all had at one time or another carried out experiments in their own districts or been responsible for considerable expendi-

ture on the use of educational films. Discussion took place on many matters of common interest such as local libraries, film making by teachers, daylight projection, the place of the sound and the silent film, and the sums allocated for film work generally.

Three of the general conclusions are of importance. First, there is no more need for experiment to establish the value of the educational film. Second, in the matter of film supply the most urgent need at present is for films for senior schools, which by reason of their comparative freedom from syllabuses and examinations could most freely use films of all kinds. Third, there is room for an English organisation of teachers on the lines of the Scottish Educational Film Association.

Two interest developments of teaching practise were mentioned. Both are the outcome of experience. It was suggested that to stop films during projection is a wrong conception of their use. It was considered to be more important that a teacher should be able to reverse the projector and run the film through again immediately. At the same time, it was suggested that instead of repeating the film twice in one lesson, it is probably more useful to be able to show the same film again a fortnight later. This pre-supposes the existence of local film libraries. Attention was called to the value of having projectors with a sufficiently powerful light output to allow of daylight projection, which is being increasingly favoured by teachers and authorities. With regard to the type of films required, continual emphasis was laid on the value of films which bring into the classroom atmosphere and general impressions of the world outside the school, and on the fact that such films make as great a contribution to education as specifically instructional films.

ON THE VALUE OF FILMS IN EDUCATION

Four local education authorities have issued reports during the past quarter. A first report issued by WOLVERHAMPTON in September, 1936, was discussed in SIGHT AND SOUND No. 19. The report from ECCLES states a case for Regional Film Libraries. This is also dealt with in the MANCHESTER report which will be fully discussed in the next number of SIGHT AND SOUND, together with the LONDON report, both of which were published too recently for review here.

WOLVERHAMPTON

During the period September, 1936, to March, 1937, covered by this Report approximately 3,500 children from 13 schools and 42 films have been brought within the scope of the experiment. All the films were shown in the Technical College Assembly Hall to which the children were brought sometimes for a programme of films on a single theme—*The Country Feeds the Town, Power, Communications, Our Daily Bread, From Sea, River and Pond*; sometimes for single films for classroom lessons. In addition, programmes of G.P.O. films were shown to ten Senior schools. Throughout the experiment, teachers were provided, with detailed notes on the films and previews of the films were also given. The notes not only dealt with the films but also drew attention to related School Broadcasts and contained lists of books available from the Children's Library.

CLASSROOM USE OF FILMS

"There is no need to re-state at length the special value of the Nature Study films: to stress the importance of the *dynamic* character of film Nature Study or to emphasise the beauty of much of the photography. Here it is sufficient to record that, if these films had done nothing else, they would have been worth while for the interest aroused. The very pertinent and searching questions to the teacher (frequently so numerous as to cause concern lest there should not be time for a second showing of the film) evidenced an intelligent curiosity which could not fail to produce valuable results when directed by an enthusiastic teacher.

"The classroom lessons also served to confirm the opinion, expressed in the earlier stages of the experiment, that the most valuable potentiality of sound in films lies in the exploitation of sound effects rather than speech. . . . What can be achieved with sound was shown in *The Highlands of Scotland*, a film that most successfully created the illusion that one was actually present in the scene depicted."

PROGRAMMES OF FILMS TO LARGE AUDIENCES

"All that has previously been pointed out as to the potentialities of films for giving children a vivid, real, and stimulating extension of their field of experience was confirmed. Nevertheless, there were three outstanding difficulties with the mass demonstrations: (1) it was not usually practicable to show a film more than once; (2) even an hour's programme contained too much material for many children (particularly Juniors); (3) it was difficult with large audiences to secure intimate contact between teachers and children. This *could* have come afterwards, on return to the classroom, but many points in the films called for immediate free discussion while the visual

images were fresh in the children's minds. The value of *programmes* of films can be tested adequately only in the case of a school with its own projector—and a teacher keen to experiment along these lines. In any case, all the difficulties mentioned above are intensified in the case of Juniors, who cannot grasp the content of a film as quickly as Seniors. Until mass demonstrations are possible under less exacting conditions, their place in the scheme must be regarded as an open question".

"As far as the films for teaching civics are concerned, the main difficulty is that 'documentary' films (to use the term generally applied to films giving this imaginative, dynamic portrayal of contemporary community life) are rarely, if ever, made specifically for children. On the contrary, they have generally been made for adult audiences in whom something more than average intelligence has been assumed. They often employ a sophisticated technique, use all the tricks of the cameraman, and generally talk to adults in adult language. Consequently, not only are there insufficient films of this type, but those available are often unduly difficult for children. . . . It is of no use to say—quite truly—that *Shipyard*, for instance, is not intended to show how a ship is constructed; for most children (and teachers too) will want to know that before they are ready to appreciate the general significance of the shipbuilding industry.

"More films like *Night Mail* are required. This did what no ordinary classroom lesson can do; it gave the child the feeling of actually being on the mail train. And it conveyed, more efficiently than any words could convey, the romance that lies behind the commonplace—all the interesting, even exciting, activities that make possible the delivery of next morning's letters. Yet it was realistic romance. In careful detail, the film shows how mail bags are picked up by the Postal Special, how letters are sorted, how bags are despatched at wayside stations, etc. Thus the detail is clear, and at the same time the general theme is comprehensible. Similar films dealing with other essential services—gas, electricity, police, fire-brigade, health, transport, etc.—would be invaluable. The qualities that appeal to children—daring, speed, the grit to overcome obstacles—may be found there just as among gangsters, with this difference: they can be shown employed in the service of the community rather than exploited for anti-social ends."

NEED FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR OF FILM TECHNIQUE

"There are indications that teachers are beginning to realise it may be desirable to teach at least some of the children what may be called the grammar of film technique.

Slow motion sequences; the deliberate blending of a number of voices previously heard separately; the choice of an unusual camera angle; the use of symbolism and rhythm—the point and purpose of these devices might well be discussed, at least incidentally, with the abler pupils, even though for most children ‘straight forward’ photography and sound recording are desirable. These devices in filmcraft are perhaps comparable with figures of speech in literature, in so far as they carry a significance not always immediately apparent, and consequently are not easily grasped by children. But, just as we do not exclude discussion of the poet’s craft from school, so we ought not altogether to fail to train children to see the meaning of that technique essential to all films that are art as well as photography.”

TEACHING DEVICES IN FILMS

“The use of a *recapitulatory sequence* and similar revisionary methods were always welcomed by teachers.

“A simple diagram to illustrate the working of a machine may be invaluable. There was indeed a general criticism of films showing machinery at work, that the shots were too brief and there were insufficient close-ups. It is no excuse to say the teacher is expected to supplement the film, because this portrayal of machinery at work is essentially where the film should provide something that few teachers can. It is not sufficient to show a seed drill silhouetted against a splendid mass of clouds, a grand display of sparks in the rolling mill, and fantastic clouds of waste steam. If the shots makes a pleasing composition the teacher is grateful, but the primary need is a clear indication of the processes involved, and so the photography must be analytic rather than rhetorical.

“*Relevant maps* were always welcomed. In several films good use was made of the possibilities of increasing and decreasing the scale of the map and of so directing attention to the whole or a part, as required.

“Experiment showed that in several cases *captions* were not displayed long enough for them to be read by 10 year olds.

“The *commentaries* of sound films were still occasionally at fault, generally because of undue speed or difficult vocabulary; but in the main they were concise, discreet, straightforward, and unaffected. Teachers showing silent films to their classes found much to learn from them in avoiding a distracting wordiness or irrelevance when interjecting their own comments. However, a more frequent decision to let any necessary commentary be spoken by persons actually appearing in the film would be welcomed. It ought not to be impossible to find farmers and fishermen, miners and engine-drivers, who can speak intelligibly.

“The *handbooks* issued with the G.B.I. films are invaluable, and their quality steadily improves. It was regretted that other distributors, though often helpful in providing typewritten synopses or commentaries on request, did not seem to realise the value of a planned booklet giving (in addition to the film content) maps, pictures, supplementary information, book-lists, and suggestions for preparatory and follow-up work. In general, there was appreciation of the marked and rapid improvement in the quality of educational films. When the evolution of the specifically educational film is compared with that of the text-book, and the brief history of the former is borne in mind, there is much to be grateful for.”

ECCLES

The Secretary to the Eccles Education Committee, in a report recently issued on the use of a single 16 mm. sound projector in 17 senior and junior schools, urges the establishment of Regional Film Libraries and a Central Film Library to distribute films to schools. During the period covered by the report—September 30th, 1935, to March 30th, 1937—854 16 mm. silent and sound films, drawn from five libraries, including the Empire and G.P.O. film libraries which issue films free, were projected (the exact number of individual films used is not given). The Secretary draws attention to the considerable expenditure on hiring films which has been and will be involved, and on this, bases his suggestion for Regional Film Libraries, which has the full support of the Head Teachers who have had the use of the projector. The Regional Film Library would be situated in a town easy of access to its administrative area and in a building which would accommodate projection and committee rooms for the use of education officers and teachers in the area.

The Head Teachers are unanimous in their desire that every school should be equipped with a silent projector and that sound projectors should also be available from the education offices. Other matters on which a questionnaire to the Head Teachers revealed agreement were: the value of using films in schools not only as an aid to teaching but also as a means of broadening the child’s horizon and as “an antidote to the artificial life portrayed in many films shown in cinemas;” the value of both sound and silent films; the lack of films suitable for junior schools; and the absolute necessity for descriptive leaflets on all educational films which can be sent to the school with the advice note confirming the booking of the film.

MANCHESTER

The report issued by the Manchester Education Committee covers the use of 16mm. silent films in a number of schools during the period October, 1935, to March, 1937, and the showing of 35mm. sound films by the G.P.O. Film Unit to children from 35 elementary schools in January, 1936, and to 15,000 children during January to March, 1937. Of the G.P.O. film programmes the report says: “The films show the child something of the world about him, aspects and patterns of life he knows nothing about. They increase his general knowledge and civic sense.” The immediate needs mentioned by the report are (1) a large local film library, (2) more projectors in schools, (3) equipping of more rooms for visual instruction, (4) the sorting out of the good films from those available.

LONDON

The experiment conducted in London during 1935–1937 was directed to investigating, not the value of films in education which the Education Committee considered was established, but the use of sound films in classrooms and the value of programmes of educational films presented in cinemas to large audiences of children during school hours. The report sets out in detail how the experiments, which involved an expenditure of £2,300, were conducted, and the reasons which led to the Committees conducting the experiment to recommend the purchase of sound projectors, the use of sound and silent films, the formation of a film library, and the continuance and extension of mass demonstrations.

FIRE OVER ENGLAND

Reviewed for Teachers by Professors F. J. C. HEARNshaw and J. E. NEALE

This review, which was first published in *The Schoolmaster*, was prepared at the request of the British Film Institute and the Historical Association. Similar reviews of all historical entertainment films will be prepared for the guidance of teachers and others interested in history. It is hoped that the reviews will result in a more critical attitude towards such films and in an appreciation of the value of good historical entertainment films as another aid to understanding an historical period.

FIRE OVER ENGLAND is a film which thousands of adults and children will be seeing, and for many it will probably remain their most vivid impression of Elizabethan England. Its admirable qualities will ensure this. Unlike the famous film on Henry VIII, there is no burlesque licence taken with the Queen. Miss Flora Robson's interpretation of Elizabeth is serious, highly skilled, and at times, intensely moving. Indeed, the general standard of acting and dialogue is very high, and care has obviously been taken to get most of the scenic effects true to period. "Altogether a very fine film," writes a reviewer in a popular paper; and the general public will probably endorse his verdict. But because it is a very fine film, some folk—and the young especially—may imagine that it is very fine history, or find difficulty in disentangling the good history that is in it from the bad. Hence it may be helpful for the historian to contribute his review of the film.

The film takes its title from Mr. A. E. W. Mason's recent historical novel, and is said to be based on it. Unlike the film on Henry VIII, it is, therefore, avowedly fiction and must be judged by standards similar to those we apply to historical novels. We are entitled to ask of historical novelists that they have an eye for the probabilities. "We must beg them," says a distinguished historian, "not to create characters or to imagine events out of keeping with the age they describe." It seems reasonable to make much the same demand of a film like *Fire Over England*.

A GOOD STORY SACRIFICED

Now the story of Robin Aubrey and his father and of Robin's romance with Cynthia Norris in Mr. Mason's novel may stretch the probabilities a little, but no farther perhaps than is legitimate in fiction, and in a general way its picture of Sir Francis Walsingham's spy system—the historical core of the story—is sound. Unfortunately, film producers sometimes seem to base their intentions on a book while basing their film on very little more than its title, and something of the sort has happened with *Fire Over England*.

Mr. Mason's pleasing story has been sacrificed—no doubt in order to bring Gloriana into the centre of the picture; and no one, seeing Miss Flora Robson's excellent

presentation of Queen Elizabeth, will dream of objecting to this. But the story substituted for Mr. Mason's is a very poor affair—second-rate melodrama, and so gross a violation of the probabilities that one is inclined to believe there must be some truth in the satires on how films are made.

In Mr. Mason's novel, Walsingham was very properly a central figure. Though a superb character, he has been blotted out of the film, and the Earl of Leicester, with time's unattractive corpulence and bloatedness removed, usurps his functions while in his own legitimate character he adds the memory of romance to the Queen. Of course, a multiplicity of characters would have been confusing, but was this the more intelligent solution of the problem?

Or compare the novel and the film at another point. In the novel, Aubrey's father fell into the hands of the Inquisition when on secret service work in Spain and with a heretical book in his possession—a possible event. In the film, his substitute, Sir Richard Ingolby, is defeated and captured in a Hollywood naval fight and is then claimed by the Inquisition on board his old friend and captor's ship. It is more than suggested that this was the usual fate of English officers captured in battle by the Spaniards. Historically speaking, the scene is absurd, and Sir Richard would, in fact, have been released as soon as his relatives had paid his ransom. The subsequent adventures in Spain of Sir Richard's son Michael, the hero of the film, are so wildly impossible that they will be recognised and judged for what they are—not very intelligent melodrama.

THE HISTORICAL FACTS

At the close of the picture, history is once more violated for the sake of melodrama. This is in the story of the English fire-ships and the Spanish Armada. Already, we notice one reviewer writing of "the grand climax of the burning of the Armada," evidently without a suspicion that it is ninety-nine per cent fiction. In the film, the idea of using fire-ships comes to Elizabeth herself, after her speech at Tilbury, and the ships are piloted by the hero, Michael, assisted by six unmasked and repentant plotters against the Queen's life. No one seems to have had the wit to tie row-boats to the fire-ships by which their pilots could escape, and Michael is seen diving exultantly into the Channel.

The Spanish ships are shown on fire and their crews jumping overboard in terror.

The historical facts are the following. The fire-ships were used on the night of July 28th, twelve days before Elizabeth's Tilbury speech. So far from being burnt, the Spanish ships cut cable and fled, while, as Sir Julian Corbett writes, the fire-ships "were seen to pass over the abandoned anchorage and burn themselves out harmlessly to leeward." They had, however, achieved their purpose, which was to dislodge the Spanish fleet.

From an educational point of view, it seems regrettable and even dangerous to link a famous incident in English history with a purely fictional character, while the gross distortion of fact and the nonsense about the repentant plotters are surely gratuitous.

The general historical setting in which the fictional adventure story is shown is fairly sound. True, there is an occasional freedom in the Court, especially when the young lovers kiss on the steps of the throne; that is not the sort of freedom in which any Elizabethan courtier would have indulged. Also, the opening audience with the Spanish Ambassador is by way of being an historical "howler." The last Spanish ambassador at Elizabeth's Court was packed out of the country three years earlier, in January 1584, and his final audience, on which the audience in the film seems to be based, was with the Privy Council, not the Queen. An ambassador might speak threatening words to a sixteenth-century sovereign, but scarcely at a public audience. One ambassador, indeed, did overstep the mark in this way; he was the Polish ambassador in 1597, and the trounc-

ing he got from the Queen—not, be it noted, from a statesman, who knew better than to break in on a formal Court ceremony, as Leicester does in the film—lived on in English tradition for many a decade.

FLORA ROBSON'S QUEEN ELIZABETH

Turning to the principal characters, we have little to criticise. No one will go far wrong who takes his idea of the historical Queen Elizabeth from Flora Robson. Her interpretation, even her words, ring true; and indeed sometimes, as in the supreme moment at Tilbury, her words are the very words spoken by Elizabeth. Leicester we have already commented on; in 1587-88 he had not the attractive figure of Mr. Leslie Banks. Burghley was excellently acted and interpreted, but he was made to look about ten years too old; the incident of Elizabeth feeding him did in fact happen, but in 1598 not 1588, and of course, not at Court. His gout was also too evident, though perhaps this was compensation for the gout from which Philip was obligingly freed. But why, in the name of Clio, was the heroine, Cynthia, made Burghley's grand-daughter? It looks like another of those many and far from subtle inspirations whose breeding ground we call Hollywood.

In spite of this criticism, we think *Fire Over England* a very fine film. Its historical setting is good, the dialogue excellent, and the acting excellent also. It might have been more than a fine film but for the very second-rate and impossible adventure story which takes the name of Mr. Mason's novel in vain.



Flora Robson as Queen Elizabeth and Leslie Banks as the Earl of Leicester in *Fire Over England*

United Artists

FILMS IN THE TEACHING OF BIOLOGY

By A. M. S. CLARK, B.A., Biology Master at Brentwood School

THE IDEA that the film was primarily of use to the geography teacher and only occasionally of use to the others, has now been disproved by its wide application in botany and zoology. Indeed, it could be claimed that the film has earned its place in the teaching of biology, since it is now possible to draw up a satisfactory syllabus in this subject based entirely upon available films. The reason for this is two-fold: (1) the production of biological films has been gradual and hence most carefully undertaken; (2) the demand for biological films being not so great as that for films in other subjects, their production has only attracted the expert and the enthusiast.

Since September, 1936, films have been used in biological instruction at Brentwood School. This was in an endeavour to ascertain the value of available films in junior work, and to see how far it was possible to incorporate them in the more specialised studies of the senior students.

THREE TYPES OF FILMS AVAILABLE

The conclusions already drawn from this experience have made it possible to foresee a sound future for the film in the teaching of biology. Analysis of the available films shows that they may be divided into three categories as regards their suitability for the varying grades of instruction. Many films of the general interest type, e.g. *Animal Life in the Hedgerows*, are of value for showing to all classes of students, in that they provide an essential background to the classroom and laboratory work, encourage an interest in the study of nature, and help to increase powers of observation. Other films produced essentially for use in the classroom, e.g. *How Plants Feed* may be embodied in a junior biology course which deals, only in broad outline, with plant and animal life. Finally, there are the films made especially for senior students e.g. *Sea Urchin*. It must be realised, however, that the boundaries between the above categories are somewhat elastic and especially, that many films produced for the classroom can serve as valuable revision material for advanced pupils. Such films contain a large amount of detail which, in the hands of a capable teacher, can easily be adapted to the requirements of the class.

The instructional films in the second two categories above are of three kinds: the Classificatory, the General Principle, and the Type films. These, serving different functions, lend themselves to varying techniques of presentation.

The Classificatory films serve as brief surveys of families in the plant and animal kingdoms. They may be employed to illustrate the general characteristics, modes of life and relationships between the families, and are intended to extend the classroom and laboratory study of the various type-specimens.

The General Principle kind of film illustrates the important processes and principles of life in the plant and animal kingdoms. It has been found that the optimum value of such films is obtained only when they are made the basis of the lesson and, in most cases, it is advisable to show the film at least twice during the one period. In the second

showing of talkie films, the teacher might, with advantage, cut off the sound and give the commentary himself. In this way it is possible to emphasise points which have been raised during the lessons, and to adapt the films more easily to the age and intellect of the class.

The Type films deal with individual specimens and trace out, in considerable detail, their external features, internal structure and life histories. Many of these films are at present available only in a form suitable for senior students. It is not generally realised how well the available Type films cover the current syllabuses for examinations such as School Certificates, Intermediate and 1st M.B.

USING THE FILMS

Many problems have presented themselves during the first year's use of biological films at Brentwood. It was evident that a certain amount of confusion was caused, in the case of the junior forms, by a too frequent use of new films. Films are now shown on an average once a fortnight, and this system gives excellent results. At first it was found that many of the younger pupils tended to regard the films as the most important part of the lessons and some disappointment prevailed when one was not shown. It was only when the cinema had been definitely established as an integral part of the school system and when films were no longer a novelty to the pupils that their full advantages were realised. It was also found from experience that it is most impractical to show an instructional film to a class simply for the sake of the film. Much time may thus be wasted, and the value of the film for any future showing will be considerably reduced.

A problem that still exists is that of providing means of reference subsequent to the showing of the film. It seems evident that when the schools finally adopt the film as an essential aid to the teaching of biology, text-books written along lines parallel to the films will be necessary.

To conclude, in the words of Dr. Julian Huxley at the Film School of last year, "The near future may well see the film as indispensable to the teaching of biology as the text-book. It must always be remembered, however, that the presence and interpretation of the teacher are necessary for both."

B.F.I. 16mm. Film Lists

Classified lists of 16mm. silent and sound films, available from all the libraries, have now been published as follows: *Geography and Travel*, *History and Science* (including Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Physiology, Zoology and Biology). The Catalogue of *British Medical Films* and the supplement to it, published by the Institute, contains titles of 16mm. and 35mm. films including a complete list of *Veterinary Films* (see p. 104). Prices of these catalogues, which are issued free to members, are given on the inside back cover of this issue of SIGHT AND SOUND.

PAINLEVÉ—SCIENTIST AND FILM-MAKER

A Survey of his contribution to educational cinema by PATRICIA HUTCHINS

IN 1915, in a world preoccupied with destruction, Paul Painlevé, Ministre de l'Instruction Publique et des Inventions in the Briand Cabinet of 1915, set up a Commission to study the use of cinematography in education. In 1927, his son, Jean Painlevé, began to produce films, and during the past ten years he has produced films varying in subject from biology and physics to popular astronomy and fairy tales.

"Certain shallow minds," Jean Painlevé wrote recently, "have declared, in reply to statements made by new converts to the cinema, that the introduction of films into the school, except as a distraction, is *la perdition de l'esprit*. This is a misconception of the real problem. There is no question of doing away with individual effort on the part of the student. The aim is to ensure that fundamental understanding will replace that learning *without* understanding which has brought us where we are to-day, and to make study easier and more interesting. The peevish will shudder at such a statement, being incapable of imagining constructive effort without pain, or the association of ideas *par une caresse au lieu d'un coup de pied*."

Jean Painlevé's object has been not only to provide new material for the study of the specialist, but to bring a living and dramatic description of unknown worlds to the cinema public. His films have been shown in cinemas in many countries and have also been used in schools and colleges all over France. Characteristic of his work is an almost ruthless elimination of the superfluous, a dry sense of humour, and, above all, the perception and imagination of an artist.

POPULAR SCIENTIFIC FILMS

An early production, *The Octopus*, illustrates his characteristic combination of purely scientific investigation with popular ideas and familiar associations, sometimes in order to expose a fallacy, sometimes to make a point doubly emphatic. The film first summarises, by means of trick photography, the legendary horror of this monster which played so important a part in *Toilers of the Deep* and other tales; then a less fearsome species, found under the rocks of Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts, is shown, its presence being betrayed by the rhythmic agitation of the water caused by its respiration. Nearby lies the debris of shellfish and mussels, broken by the fierce beak-like mouth. By means of close-up and cinemicrography the film analyses the structure of the tentacles which are capable of extending more than twice the length of the leather bottle-shaped body, the eyes resembling those of the higher vertebrates and the pores of the skin. The film also shows how the octopus either creeps by means of its tentacles, or swims in expelling the water from its gills through a tube or funnel which is served by a large gland capable of producing an effective smoke screen to cover a hasty departure.

Crabs and Shrimps deals with two dissimilar, but nevertheless aimably indifferent, neighbours: indeed at one moment a shrimp is seen swallowing a titbit while poised nonchalantly on the head of his rather crusty companion. Painlevé has tried to show the animals in his films living as

nearly as possible under natural conditions. Here he distinguishes between rock shrimp and sandhopper, and contrasts the fully-grown crab with the young filmed a few days after birth. *The Daphnia* provides an interesting opportunity for the use of the microscope in showing the general characteristics of the species. These tiny freshwater "fleas" are sufficiently transparent to reveal many details of their anatomy: the play of muscles involved in their curious leaping movement, the single eye capable of pivoting in all directions, and the traces of its rudimentary fellow, the antennæ and means of respiration.

Little had been generally known of *Caprellas* and *Pantopodes* until the camera revealed their peculiarities. The first is a taper-like crustacean which hangs on to the seaweeds with the claws or hooks of its back legs, and moves by a jerky inflection of the body; hence its name. Although Pantopodes—in Greek "all foot"—have a hard covering, they look rather like spiders and swim by violently moving their legs backwards and forwards. As the Pantopodes grow up their body becomes smaller until heart, intestines and other organs are stored away in those all important legs. *The Hermit Crab* in its search for a comfortable shell shown in a film on the species, gives full scope to that very personal gift of observation which makes Painlevé's treatment so much more than a zoological exposition of facts.

Two of these films have been exhibited in this country: *Hyas* and *Stenorinques*, reviewed in the last issue of SIGHT AND SOUND, and *The Sea Horse*, which Painlevé regards as one of his most successful films. It took more than three months to make and nearly 2,000 metres of stock were exposed for a film 300 metres in length. The biological version is noteworthy as a documentation of the part played by the male in bearing the young. Close-up and dissection are smoothly woven into the pattern of the film by a commentary, which makes the final sequence of a dimly seen racecourse a touch of fantasy in no way incongruous.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

A second group of films has been produced specifically for the purpose of more specialised study and research. *The Egg of the Stickleback* is a documentary 800 metres long, dealing with all the phenomena taking place from fertilisation until the time of birth. Typical also of this group are *The Blood of the Sipunculus*, *Circulation* and *Tissue Culture*. *Facial Surgery* and a number of other short films, demonstrating the value of the camera in recording operations, have been made by Painlevé in collaboration with Dr. Claoué.

THE INSTITUTE OF SCIENTIFIC CINEMATOGRAPHY

The Institute of Scientific Cinematography, which Painlevé founded in 1930, has done much to correlate scientific film activities, both professional and amateur, over a very wide field. Expert technical advice and, when possible, financial assistance, have been given to pioneers in all branches of science who would otherwise work in isolation. A library of some eight hundred films has been collected; special shows are arranged for members, at which interest-

ing experiments—such as those of Dr. Djian in combining cinematography with radiology—have been exhibited and discussed. The Association for Photographic Documentation and Cinematography in the Sciences came into being as a result of the Institute's work. The annual Congress in Paris, which brings together scientists and educationists from many countries, will be held for the fifth time early in October.

A number of important films have been made by members of the Institute. After a journey of 10,000 kilometres with the mission of the Société Astronomique de France to the Caucasus, M. Leclerc obtained invaluable data on the eclipse of the sun on June 19th, 1936. The film was taken by means of special filters and a telephoto lens of 100 mm. diameter with a focal length of one metre, the image being obtained from one of the mirrors of a coelostat. Images of the disc of the sun 9.5 mm. in diameter were obtained at the speed of two frames a second. In spite of a cloudy sky, the photography is excellent and the film makes interesting comparison with a newsreel taken in Paris at the time of the partial eclipse. M. Leclerc's film also gives an impression of the airport at Beloretchevskaja, a glimpse of the other missions installed there, the setting up of the various instruments, and the curiosity of the Russians of the locality who watched the scientists.

In a sense less realistic than the unadorned statement of events, *Voyage dans le Ciel* by M. Dufour is the presentation of modern theories of the universe in terms of visual experience. The film takes the form of an imaginary journey from the earth to the moon and the planets, and on to the

galaxies of stars and the farthest visible nebulae. Commentary well matched to adroit cutting which gives pace and variation, leads up to the dramatic contrast of measureless space with the varied loveliness of the earth. Experiments with a great number of materials and different models were made to obtain the unusual effects of lighting and photography which give unity to the film.

The success of this experiment has been followed by *Notre Planete la Terre* which outlines the birth and gradual death of the earth. The first few hundred feet which I was privileged to see, ingeniously suggested the contraction of the earth's surface by means of bands of varied plasticine, the formation of mountains and valleys; while the ruins of old civilisations among the waterless sands, the shifting and changing zones of vegetation indicate the many changes taking place.

FUTURE PRODUCTIONS

The possibilities—and the impracticabilities—of colour on the screen have not been ignored. An unusual film will be completed this autumn by René Bertrand, a sculptor who, aided by children, has modelled hundreds of puppets and made elaborate sets in coloured plasticine for a Gaspar-color version of the fairy tale Bluebeard. Jean Painlevé, himself, is working on an experiment to show the processes involved in the electrolysis of silver which he thinks is only possible by means of slow motion. At the same time he is preparing *Assassins des Eaux Douces* and hopes to finish this year, an illustration of the four dimensional theory.

LECTURES ON THE CINEMA

During the past twelve months, the officers of the British Film Institute, gave or arranged forty lectures and demonstrations to teachers' organisations, local education committees, etc., on the use of educational films and projectors in schools, and on the work of the British Film Institute. Already requests are being received for the coming autumn and winter. Societies and organisations are urged to make any requests which they are thinking of making to the Institute as soon as possible. The services of a number of teachers and others, in many parts of the country, who have had practical experience of using films in schools have been enlisted so that lectures and demonstrations may be arranged, if necessary, without the expense of bringing speakers from London. Similar arrangements have been made for speakers on the work of the British Film Institute, to supplement the activities of the officers of the Institute.

For lectures on the social, æsthetic and educational aspects of the cinema, the attention of secretaries of societies is drawn to the Panel of Lecturers which has been formed by Associated Realist Film Producers. This organisation is a non-profit-making group representative of documentary film-makers. The Panel of lecturers includes: Edgar Anstey, Thomas Baird, Andrew Buchanan, Ritchie Calder, Alberto Cavalcanti, Elsie Cohen, Richard de Rochemont, Arthur Elton, Russell Ferguson, John Grierson, Forsyth Hardy, Stanley Hawes, J. B. Holmes, Julian Huxley, Alfred Jünge, Dr. F. D. Klingender, Stuart Legg, Margery Locket, Victor Peers, Paul Rotha, George H. Sewell, Alexander Shaw, Evelyn Spice, John Taylor, Basil Ward, Harry Watt, Norman Wilson and Basil Wright. (Secretary, A.R.F.P., 33 Soho Square, London, W.1.)

R.P.S. KINE EXHIBITION 1937

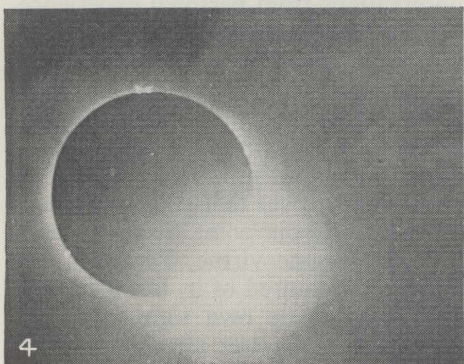
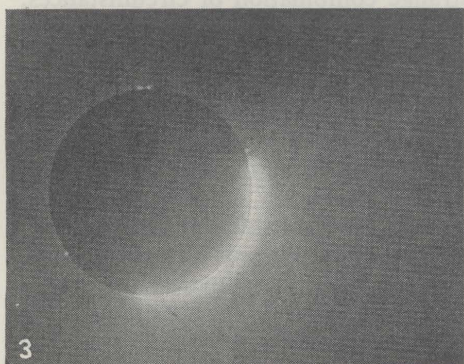
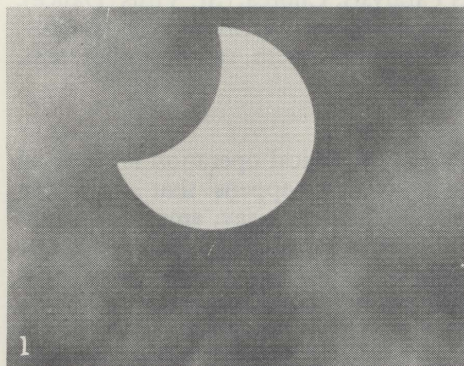
An Exhibition of Kinematography, comprising Films, Stills and Apparatus will be held at the Galleries of the Royal Photographic Society at 35 Russell Square, London, W.C.1, from November 13th to November 27th, 1937. The keynote of this exhibition will be "The Film as a Social Force." During its course, lectures and demonstrations of interest to both Professionals and Amateurs will be given.

A Competition, embracing all types of films, has been arranged and a selection from the films receiving awards will be shown during the Exhibition. The classes in the Film Competition are as follows: (i) 35mm. monochrome, not exceeding 2,000 feet in length; (ii) 35mm. colour, not exceeding 2,000 feet in length; (iii) sub-standard monochrome, not exceeding 30 minutes' running time; (iv) sub-standard colour, not exceeding 30 minutes' running time; (v) scientific or Technical subjects, 35mm. or sub-standard, in monochrome or colour, not exceeding 30 minutes' running time; (vi) Cameo films, sub-standard only, monochrome, not exceeding four minutes' running time. Entries must reach the Secretary on or before October 11th, 1937. Every entry must be accompanied by an entry form, duly completed in all details.

The following have been invited to act as a panel of Judges for the Competition: Adrian Brunel, Andrew Buchanan, John Chear, Henry Edwards, Leslie Eveleigh, Miss Mary Field, John Grierson, Robert Herring, J. Holmes, Paul Holt, P. L. Mannock, A. Pereira, Oliver Pike, Fred Pullin, J. H. Ridley, L. Rudkin, Victor Saville, Fred Watts, G. C. Weston, Harold Wormleighton, I. D. Wratten, Basil Wright.

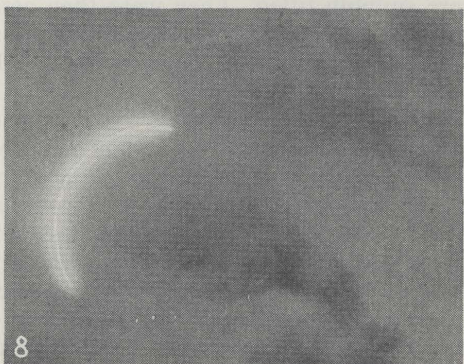
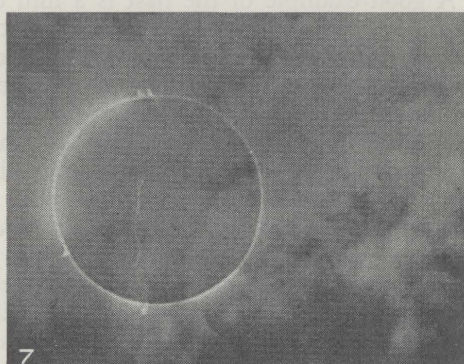
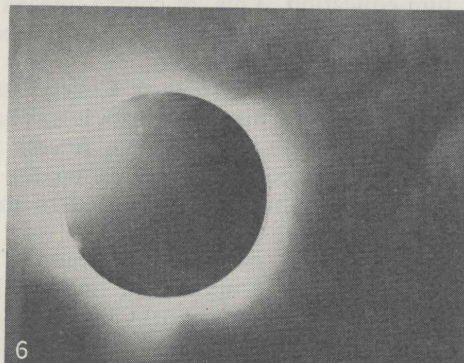
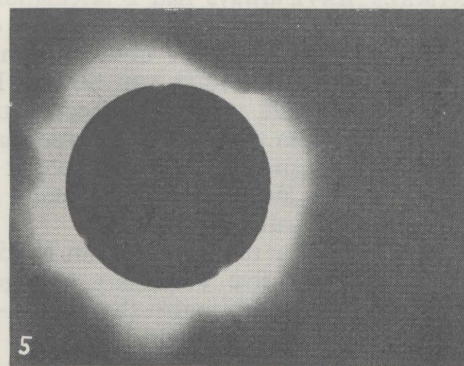
SOLAR ECLIPSE, JUNE 19, 1936

Eight frames from a complete film taken by M. LECLERC, who was a member of the expedition sent by the Société Astronomique de France to the Caucasus (see page 102); with notes by DR. ARTHUR BEER, of the University of London Observatory.



OBSERVATION OF a total solar eclipse is one of the most thrilling gambles of scientific research. After elaborate and highly specialised apparatus has been built, taken possibly halfway round the world, and set up with meticulous care, the best that can be hoped for usually is perhaps two or three minutes of observing time. But even that outcome is entirely dependent upon the caprice of the weather. A tiny cloud over the sun may spoil everything. Dr. I. C. Gardiner, the leader of a successful American expedition, sent to Asiatic Russia to observe the great eclipse of June 19th, 1936, is right in concluding his reflections with these words: "Dame Nature must have been in a truly sporting mood, when she provided the eclipse - producing mechanism for the earth."

These frames from M. Leclerc's film show the events after the moon's shadow had reached the observer: corona, chromosphere and prominences become visible. These give altogether a light only about half of the full moon. But a much larger quantity of light is sent in from the surrounding air, where, some thirty miles away the sun is still shining. And then, just before the sun reappears, its lower atmosphere, with its steel-white light, comes into view. Then, instantaneously, the dazzling photosphere emerges, and the outer corona vanishes, whereas the inner one still remains visible, for less than a minute perhaps, forming a thin, yellowish ring. Owing to irradiation in the observer's eye, the first speck of sun appears much larger than it really is, and in the first moment strikingly resembles a jewel on a ring; the phrase "diamond ring" was coined on former occasions to describe this appearance. Shortly later the inner corona also is drowned out by the returning light and the spectacle is over.



MAKING FILMS FOR ANIMALS

P. W. SOUTHERN writes on this subject from experience gained during eight years of making films for the Royal Veterinary College, London, and the University of London Animal Welfare Society. A pioneer in a necessarily limited field, his films have been widely used in this country and abroad.

ANIMALS HAVE always had a fascination for professional and amateur photographer alike, yet it is doubtful whether the idea of filming sick or injured animals would appeal to many readers of SIGHT AND SOUND. In all probability the majority would vote the subject-matter dull, but this is in fact far from the truth. It is true that in much of the work, the movement so essential to put interest into the average film is lacking, but the results can be, and are, instructive and valuable.

The market for this type of film is admittedly limited, there being only five Veterinary Colleges in the British Isles. Even if one adds to that the English-speaking colleges in the colonies and abroad, the total market is small compared to the markets available for less specialised forms of film education. This, of course, means that the demand for this type of film is limited, with a consequent higher overhead cost in production.

When the Royal Veterinary College started to turn out its own films some nine years ago, it was hard to find money to spare for such an innovation. A very watchful eye was kept upon the footage expended on the various types of subject tackled, having due regard to their usefulness in the curriculum of the College.

Piece by piece, however, a library of some fifty films was gradually built up, which may be broadly classified under two main headings: (a) Clinical. (b) Surgical.

CLINICAL FILMS

A good example of the first is a film commenced eight years ago and still unfinished—indeed it is doubtful if it will be completed for many years to come. The subject-matter is *Lameness in the Horse*. It owes its inception to the arrival at the College Clinic one day, of a horse suffering from fever in the feet, or to give it the more technical name, Laminitis. The gait of the afflicted animal was duly recorded photographically before and after treatment. Thereafter, other horses suffering from different types of lameness and peculiarities of gait, came and went. Short lengths of film, varying from some 35 feet up to 100 feet or more in some cases, were shot, showing the gait of the animal before and after treatment. These, augmented by slow motion sequences and diagrams where necessary, were suitably titled. They were then assembled in a pre-arranged order, demonstrating lameness, due firstly to afflictions having their origin in the fore hoof, followed by those affecting joints further up the fore limb as far as the shoulder. Hind leg lameness was dealt with in like manner. The result to-day is the possession of a three-reel film which presents to the student at one sitting something which the college had never been able to accomplish before, i.e., a series of the various types of lameness, with the distinctive gait of each portrayed far more clearly than mere words could ever convey, accompanied by the necessary treatment for each case, and—most important of all—the result to be expected from the adoption of such treatment.

Other clinical films include the progress of, and recovery

from such maladies as Paralysis, Chorea, (St. Vitus' Dance), diseases having their origin in mal-nutrition, skin diseases, and many others of the nervous system, respiratory system, or of pathological origin.

SURGICAL FILMS

Similarly, the filming of a surgical operation is of equal value. For example, it seldom happens that when the lecturer reaches the subject of, let us say, amputation of a limb, there happens to be a case ready to hand to demonstrate the involved surgical technique. To this, too, must be added the most important fact that, given a well-made film, the whole class can witness an operation from the ideal viewpoint, whereas in actual practice where the class consists of fifty students crowded round an operating table, only a few will enjoy this privilege.

PRACTICAL HINTS

For clinical films most of the filming can be done in the open, and if weather conditions happened to be unfavourable, it was usually possible to secure a postponement (at least for a while) until conditions improved. In the handling of surgical cases, however, there can be no delay on account of weather, time of day, or any other reason. Speed is essential. This is of little import in the case of the smaller animals which are invariably operated upon under cover, where the filming is accomplished by artificial light. But horses or farm animals are usually operated upon in the open. By a strange combination of circumstances, these emergency operations usually occur about the middle of a grey winter afternoon. Two projection lamps of 500 watts which were available, do not by any means provide lavish illumination for the area occupied by a recumbent horse or cow. And I have vivid memories of an over-zealous junior House Surgeon tripping over one of the flexible leads, putting one lamp out of action at the critical point in an operation on a cow, stabled in a dark loose-box. The only other source of illumination was a small window, and a sixty-watt ceiling lamp. Fortunately, welcome assistance from an onlooker, who held the remaining lamp just out of the field of view, and a wide aperture lens, saved the day.

At this point two observations from personal experience may not come amiss. First I would mention the matter of footage. Most amateurs seem afraid to use enough film. Remember that, provided the movement is there, and that it is varied and not merely repetitive, your subject will stand quite a long shot. Anyway, it is a simple matter to trim down afterwards, but often impossible to stage a re-take of a subject when you discover that you have failed to secure enough film to illustrate your point. Secondly, and equally important, is that supreme virtue, Patience. An animal will usually do what is required of it, but it has an uncomfortable habit of choosing its own time to do it. I have an unpleasant memory of a wet afternoon spent with a wet and extremely fed-up Professor of Anatomy.

An equally wet groom led a large cart horse up and down the quadrangle, halting each time he drew level with us, in a vain attempt to make the animal rest a limb in an attitude characteristic of a certain lameness. The sequence was finally obtained, but only after an hour's wait in the rain.

In tackling films of this type, there are certain generally accepted rules of good photography with which one has to compromise. As an instance, let us take the case of a trotting horse. Here is movement in plenty. The veriest tyro, who had read the instructions supplied with his camera, would realise that if he were to attempt a medium close broadside shot, his result would inevitably be marred by background judder, due to the need for panning his camera too quickly. He might save his picture by resorting to a head-on, or an oblique shot. Unfortunately, for veterinary purposes it is often imperative to follow a close broadside view, to illustrate, for example, the flexing of a certain joint or the movement of a muscle at some point in the gait. In such cases, the background has to be left to take care of itself, although I would point out to the amateur that much can be done by choosing a spot which gives a background free from sharp lines such as brick walls, and prominent buildings.

FILMING AN OPERATION

The handling of surgical films calls for little comment beyond attention to one or two special details. Time is everything in the operating theatre. Once the surgeon has begun the operation, it is no use asking him to "Wait while I move my lamps and re-focus. I want to take it from *here*." Such a request is likely to provoke brief but very caustic comment. To surgeons and veterinarians (there are many enthusiastic movie-makers in their ranks) and others who contemplate making their own pictures in the operating theatre, I recommend from experience the following points:—

Have two cameras if possible. Reloading always seems to become necessary just at the most important point of the operation, and the surgeon cannot wait while you carry this out, however nimble you are at the job.

Carry a piece of chalk and a six-foot steel spring tape in your pocket. The former can be used to mark some general guides as to focus on the floor before commencing

operations. If, then, the surgeon obscures your view with his body halfway through the filming, you can change position quickly with some hopes of not losing the remainder of the film due to faulty focus. The steel tape can be readily sterilised by dipping the end into antiseptic solution, and will enable you to measure to an inch all those close-up shots which go to make ninety-five per cent of a surgical picture.

For lighting utilise the best naturally lighted portion of the theatre or operating room. Combined with either two 500-watt projector-type lamps and reflectors, or four lamps of the photoflood type, this will provide ample illumination for all average subjects. Film of the super-panchromatic type will enable you to work with a certain amount of lens aperture in hand to cope with any unforeseen circumstances. And, a word of warning, do not overlook spare bulbs for the lamps.

PROPAGANDA FILMS ON ANIMAL WELFARE

There remains one aspect of animal filming upon which we have not yet touched—the films on animal welfare produced by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the University of London Animal Welfare Society and kindred organisations.

I have been privileged to assist the latter Society in its productions of films designed to instruct the uninitiated in the ways of keeping and handling the various domestic animals in health. So much disease, sickness, and suffering is still being caused to animals by ignorance (rather than by intent), that there is a vast field yet to be covered in this sphere. That a good start has already been made says much for the progressive policies of the Societies concerned.

These films follow, broadly speaking, the same lines as regards technique as the more advanced veterinary films, but to add interest for the lay mind it is usual to weave a story into the "Welfare" matter, especially in the case of those made for children. Their popularity with both scholars and teachers alike, speaks volumes for their utility as an educative agent, but that is a matter which might well form the subject of a separate article. Each film of this type has to be treated from the technical viewpoint as a separate unit, if it is to put its lesson over successfully to its audience.

EDUCATIONAL FILM LIBRARIES

DANCE-KAUFMANN, 18 Upper Stanhope Street, Liverpool, 8. Most of the Dance-Kaufmann cyclic films on physics, mechanics, and mathematics, which have been temporarily withdrawn from circulation, are now available. Full details can be obtained from the producers.

EDUCATIONAL AND GENERAL SERVICES, 37 Golden Square, London, W.1. A series of 16mm. silent films on the regional geography of South West Europe, made by Elder Dalrymple Productions, and designed to meet the requirements of the Glasgow Education Committee are now available. Most of the series deal with Portugal.

G.B. INSTRUCTIONAL, Film House, Wardour Street, London, W.1. Recent additions, in 35mm. and 16mm. sound, to the G.B. Instructional Film Library, include a series of eight films on swimming made in collaboration with the Amateur Swimming Association and a series of geography films on Scotland; the latter are also available in 16mm. mute version for use on silent projectors.

G.P.O. FILM LIBRARY, Imperial Institute, South Kensington, S.W.7. The following films have been added to the G.P.O. Film Library: 35mm., 16mm., 9.5mm. silent: *Foretelling the Weather, Cable Ship, The Story of Stamps, How Stamps are Made, Ship for Sale, Modern Post Office Methods*; 35mm., 16mm. silent: *How to Tell a Phone, Communication by Wire, Mountain Telephone*; 35mm. silent: *Theatreland, Who Writes to Switzerland*; 35mm., 16mm., sound: *Weather Forecast, Calendar of the Year, 6.30 Collection, Post Haste, Conquering Space, Savings Bank, The Saving of Bill Blewitt, Fairy of the Phone, Line to Tschierova Hut, Message from Geneva*; 35mm. sound: *The King's Stamp, Men of the Alps, The Four Barriers*.

VISUAL EDUCATION, Temple Road, London, N.W.2. The following 16mm. silent films are now available: *The Fens, Kew Gardens* (also available 16mm. sound), *Rate of Change*, (an exposition of the differential calculus), *Fleetwood Travellers, Dartmoor Southwards, Cornish Pyramids*. A number of films made by the Dartington Hall Film Unit are also distributed by Visual Education (for titles see p. 106).

FILM PRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

WILLIAM HUNTER, Film Officer at Dartington Hall, and author in 1932 of *Cinema Scrutiny*, writes here of practical film making for teachers and schools. For five years now films have been recognised as a normal part of the educational system at this school. The physics, chemistry and biology laboratories and the geography room are equipped for projection and films are regularly used in these subjects. Regular evening performances are given of outstanding films not ordinarily shown in public cinemas since the local cinema is not out-of-bounds to the school. Courses on film appreciation and film technique are given practical application in the School Film Unit which has already produced six films in circulation to other schools and is now working on an economic basis.

THERE ARE SO many aspects of classroom film production, that I shall confine myself in this article strictly to a single aspect—how to produce a film on a given theme as efficiently and as cheaply as possible.

The most expensive, inefficient, and unsatisfactory way to produce a teaching film is to think of a theme, to go out, and blaze away in the expectation of obtaining sufficient material to string together into some semblance of continuity.

This carefree method is expensive and inefficient for several reasons. One is certain to take more of some aspects of the subject than necessary, while other aspects will be inadequately covered. This latter defect will only be detected in the assembling of the material, when it is usually too late to remedy it. A more serious drawback is that one inevitably cuts the film on the material available, rather than shooting material to assemble in a predetermined manner.

How can these inefficient production methods be remedied?

The first stage in the production of a film is evidently the choice of the subject. In deciding this you must bear in mind—if you hope to circulate the film—the demand that there is, and your own opportunities of supplying it. Let us suppose, however, that two themes have been decided upon, a film on the development of a river system, and a film on a Cornish fishing village.

ESTIMATING COSTS

It is essential, however difficult, to estimate costs at this early stage as accurately as possible. If the film has to be

abandoned through lack of means before it is completed, the chances are that all the money spent will be wasted. So that from the very beginning your funds determine the type of film you can attempt, and probably the kind of approach to your subject that is possible. Let us again suppose that the film on the river will only run in its final form for ten minutes, while the village will run for fifteen. As a teacher, you will know whether or not these running times are justified. This will mean 200 and 300 feet of film respectively, which is your guide in costing. You will start by allowing a ratio of film used to film shot. Waste is essential, not extravagant, however paradoxical this may sound, and it is more than a mere matter of cutting out the bad photography. The truth of this will be evident in the editing stage of production. You should allow a *minimum* waste of 2 : 1. You simply cannot make a good film without throwing some of it away. But in estimating the proportion, the difference in the two selected themes will have to be taken into account. The waste in the river film should be less than in the village film. In a film in which people take a large part, whether under your direction or unconscious of the camera's presence, things do not always happen just as you anticipate. Rivers are not temperamental and do not make mistakes. Consequently, to allow a proportion of film shot to film used of 2 : 1 in the river film is reasonable, while in the village film, in which presumably a large part of the film will deal with people doing things, an estimate of 3 : 1 would be more cautious. Even more will be necessary if it is your first effort at directing people. And it is always better to over-estimate rather than under-estimate footage and general expenditure.

Dartington Hall Film Unit 16 mm. Films

NO WORK ON SUNDAY

CAMP NEWSREEL 1935

THE SENIOR SCHOOL (*in production*)

AGILITY WORK (*in production*)

These are Documentary and Propaganda films illustrating various aspects of the life of the School. Application for the use of them should be made to The Film Unit, Dartington Hall School, Totnes, S. Devon.

CANARY BANANAS

N.W. DERBYSHIRE: THE FACE OF THE LAND

N.W. DERBYSHIRE: COMMUNICATIONS

N.W. DERBYSHIRE: THE USE OF THE LAND; INDUSTRIAL

N.W. DERBYSHIRE: THE USE OF THE LAND; AGRICULTURAL

SHEEP DIP

These are Educational films intended for use in classrooms; distributed by Visual Education, Temple Road, N.W.2

TIMBER: *in collaboration with the Timber Development Association*

THE WANDERING PEOPLE: *based on material from Turksib, in collaboration with Kino Films*

SPRINGS AND WELLS: *an animated diagrammatic film*

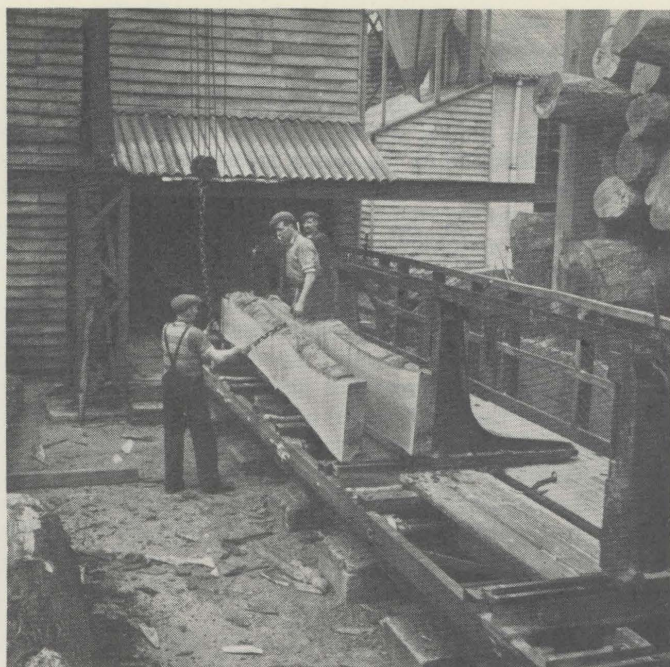
FARMERS OF THE FJORD: *A film on Norway, in collaboration with Visual Education*

THE NATURAL REGIONS OF NORWAY

THE SOUTH WESTERN PENINSULA, THE PENNINE UPLANDS: *two short diagrammatic films for examination purposes*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COTTON INDUSTRY and COTTON TODAY: *Two films, one historical, the other geographical, dealing with the development and present position of the cotton industry in Britain*

These films are now in production and will be completed between now and the autumn, 1938. As each film is ready for distribution announcements will be made in educational and film journals.



Timber

Dartington Hall

Here, then, are two estimates (working on 16 mm. negative-positive):

	River System			Cornish Village		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Negative stock ..	4	0	0 (400 ft.)	9	0	0 (900 ft.)
Developing and first print ..	2	10	0	5	12	6
Other chemical processing, mixes, fades, diagrams, titles, etc. ..	3	0	0	4	0	0
Final print ..	1	5	0 (200 ft.)	1	17	6 (300 ft.)
Total ..	10	15	0	20	10	0

Against contingencies such as poor photography, jammed cameras, scratched negatives, and other misfortunes impossible to assess in advance, I should increase these estimates to £13 and £23 respectively.

PREPARING THE SCRIPT

The next stage is the production of a scenario detailed. The temptation to skimp this stage is always present, especially when the sun shines and the location is close at hand. One can always argue that some things will have to be in the scenario, so they may as well be taken while the sun is out. But it is a temptation to be overcome, unless expense is no object. It is true that it is not always possible to make a detailed script before the location is visited. Your material, for instance, may be wholly obtained from maps and books, or even hearsay, and it may not be possible to know the location before you get there to shoot. But even in this case, at the very least a detailed synopsis of the material you want should be written, and, within limits, it should be adhered to in spite of every temptation to digress. Here, obviously, it is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules. But in the example given, whether the river or rivers are known or not, a detailed script could and should be written and adhered to. Otherwise you will find yourself with many feet of beautiful, perhaps, but redundant shots of streams and rivers. Of the village, perhaps a detailed



N.W. Derbyshire

Dartington Hall

script will be impossible if you do not already know it. Then you must, it cannot be too strongly stressed, know the sort of things you want and the reasons why you want them. When, the script is completed, you will be able, after some experience, to revise your first estimate, possibly reduce it, perhaps have to increase it. The advice of other people on the finished script is useful. It should be discussed, and if possible, expert advice sought, especially if you want to be able to persuade others to use the film. Such bodies as the British Film Institute, for instance, are willing to give such advice.

Now, and only now, can you begin to think of going out into the field, and for the first time the camera comes into account.

SHOOTING AND CUTTING

Ideally, the cameraman's job is to transpose the written script into images. These in their turn become the raw material from which the finished film is assembled. There is not space here to consider the many aspects of good camera work. At most, one can offer a few snippets of advice. Always use a filter for landscapes. Don't take pictures of things simply because they are beautiful. The beauty of the material is, or should be, incidental, and a photograph, however brilliant, of a beautiful tree or a bird in flight, if they are irrelevant to the script, have no justification. This is simply a repetition of the warning that above all you should follow the script and remember what you are in the field for. Important actions, when you are photographing people or moving objects, should, whenever possible, be photographed from more than one position, as this helps considerably in the cutting stage, as well as revealing several complementary aspects of the same object. Don't try to economise at this stage by not taking enough of the scenes you require. It is far better, through accurate scripting, to take nothing of the scenes you do not require. If your scripting is good, the cameraman will not have to worry about economy.

When all your material has been shot, the most important stage of all arrives—the assembling of the various shots you

have obtained. It is at this stage that the production will be made or marred, for we may assume that the photography is adequate, and that the initial stages outlined above have been completed. This is the stage at which economy ceases. The best working hypothesis here is, "Never hesitate to throw away." If you photograph your own film, the temptation to keep in good shots will at first be considerable, but if you are afraid to cut out even your best shots you may risk the success of the film. It is not good construction to keep in useless stuff because it happens to be well photographed. Don't forget that most of your audiences will take good photography for granted.

An advantage at this stage that the professionals have not, but which the teacher has, is an experimental audience. You can show the film at various stages to groups of children of different ages. Their responses will be invaluable. Where they are bored, it is probable that the film is slow, and you must speed it up by increasing the cutting tempo. Where they cannot understand, the fault is probably in the film: it may be badly constructed, there may be insufficient

material, it may be cut too quickly; it may be all of these things. (It is also possible for the teacher to use his shooting script as a basis for classes before he actually begins shooting, and thus estimate in advance the sections which are clear and those which are not. Children's questions may lead to modifications in the script before shooting begins.) Having tried out the films and learnt what you can from the children, you can determine the film's final form. It is then ready for matching with the negative, and the final print completes the process of production.

This kind of work is abundantly worth doing. The teacher has a great opportunity at present, for films are being increasingly used in schools; and the demand far outweighs the supply of good films that are available. He has the advantage over the professional of knowing children better, and knowing better what is wanted in the classroom. The lack of technical knowledge which everyone must begin with is not an insuperable obstacle, and even failure is valuable in the experimental phases in a new form of film expression.

EDUCATIONAL CINEMA NEWS

WALES

At the annual conference of the Federation of Education Committees of Wales and Monmouthshire, one session was devoted to the use of educational films. The speakers were Mr. Somerville Vernon, Head of the Department of Applied Physics, Cardiff Technical College, and Mr. Norman Davies, of Howard Gardens High School, Cardiff, both officers of the Cardiff and South Wales Film Institute Society, and the Assistant General Manager of the Film Institute. A comprehensive selection of 16 mm. silent and sound films was shown, and a great deal of enthusiasm and interest was aroused. A first result of the demonstration was that the Film Institute, through its Cardiff Society, was asked by the Director of Education for Cardiff to arrange a similar lecture and demonstration for the headmasters of the High School and Senior Schools.

MIDDLESEX SCHOOLS FILM SOCIETY

A Middlesex Schools' Film Society is to be formed at a meeting to be held on Monday, September 27th at 6.30 p.m. at 10 Great George Street, Westminster, S.W.1. The object of the Society is to enable teachers in Middlesex schools who are using films or wish to do so, to exchange experience and discuss educational films. Lectures will be arranged on the manipulation of projectors and the use of films in the teaching of biology, geography, civics, etc.; programmes of films will be regularly shown and discussed, and it is hoped to form a producing unit to make simple educational films.

DEVON EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Devon Education Committee has decided to purchase two 16 mm. projectors which are to be used in various schools, in order that a number of schools may gain experience in the use of films in the classroom. The Committee has also made grants towards the purchase of two further 16 mm. sound projectors by two senior schools. In the future, the Committee has announced that it will make grants to schools wishing to purchase projectors up to 50 per cent, and up to a total expenditure of £300 in any financial year. Projectors to qualify for such grants must be either sound projectors, or silent projectors capable of adaptation for sound. The Committee has also approved

expenditure on the hiring of films and has made a grant to enable one of its officers to attend the London Film School.

TATLER EDUCATIONAL FILM SHOWS

Continuing its policy of presenting programmes of specifically instructional films on Saturday mornings at 12 o'clock, the Tatler Theatre, Charing Cross Road, has shown a programme of G.B. Instructional films—*The Blood*, *The Frog*, *The Earthworm* and *Heredity*—to 250 First M.B. students. Two programmes of films on swimming and tennis have also been presented. The programme of films designed for Matriculation and General School Certificate candidates was so successful that it had to be presented twice to accommodate all those who wished to see it. It is probable that similar programmes will be presented during next autumn and winter at a number of provincial cinemas.

SOUTH AFRICA

The annual grant for the purchase of films by the Film Division of the National Bureau of Educational and Social Research has now been increased to £2,600 (see SIGHT AND SOUND, No. 21, p. 15). The Library now possesses 400 16mm. silent and sound films for circulation to schools and other educational institutions, and is also acquiring a library of 35mm. film strips. The first teachers' vacation course organised by the Film Division, was held on April 1st-3rd, and similar courses are now being arranged in all the provinces of the Union.

MALTA

A film library is being formed by the Educational Department, since it has been found more economical to purchase than to hire films for the evening exhibitions which have been given in many schools to children and adults. The film programmes have been so successful that it is probable that considerable extensions of visual education in the schools will be undertaken in the near future.

LONDON FILM SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

The scholarships offered to readers of SIGHT AND SOUND were given to Mr. C. Jolliffe of Tingewick, Bucks, and Mr. H. M. Dowling of Cardiff.

THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE

President : The DUKE OF SUTHERLAND, K.T.

WITHIN THIRTY YEARS the cinema has become one of the great industries of the world. Its influence for good or ill cannot be overestimated. In Great Britain alone the average weekly attendance at the cinema is about 20,000,000 and box office receipts are well over £800,000 a week. At the same time the teaching world has realised the value of the film as a teaching instrument and every month more Local Education Authorities or schools are acquiring and using projectors and films.

So vast and so powerful an industry needs all the guidance that it can receive from thoughtful members of the community. Realisation of this fact has led to the formation of the British Film Institute. To provide a solid foundation for its work the Privy Council has year by year given it a grant from the Sunday Cinema Fund.

In general, the Institute exists to encourage the use of the cinema as a means of entertainment and instruction. In particular it acts as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad, with special reference to education and general culture. It provides advice and assistance in the use of films and choice of apparatus and promotes research into the various uses of the film.

In the four years of its life, the Institute has become an unparalleled centre of information. Use is constantly made of its services not only by members of the general public but also by government departments, education authorities, schools, film societies and the film trade. It makes known the information in its possession, in a general way, through this quarterly magazine SIGHT AND SOUND, occasional leaflets and pamphlets, as for instance on Non-Theatrical Cinema Apparatus and Films, and subject lists of teaching films. In the MONTHLY FILM BULLETIN are reviewed fictional and non-fictional films of all types and an effort is made to assess their value either in educational terms or by their suitability for different types of audience.

Through its expert Committees there is being built up a body of knowledge on the use of the film for many different purposes. In the main the emphasis of this work has been educational since this was the field in which there was most to be done; the Institute has also concerned itself with entertainment Films for Children, and with Colonial and Dominion problems. Full details of the Institute's activities are contained in its Annual Report a copy of which will be gladly sent on request.

Last but not least of the Institute's activities is its National Film Library through which some 400 films have been rescued from the scrap heap or dug out of old lumber rooms and are now preserved for posterity. (Copies of some of the more interesting are available on loan to Full Members of the Institute). The collection also contains copies of many modern films so that in years to come it will be possible for the student to see the stages in the development of the film and its technique, as well as the social manners and customs of to-day.

Though the major portion of the Institute's finances is the Privy Council grant, it is most important that it should have the material support of all bodies and individuals that have at heart the encouragement of the best type of film and the full development of the cinema. Obviously the best guarantee that its work shall be adequately performed is a strong membership and effective organisation throughout the country to co-ordinate local activities in the same manner as does the parent body in London. Film Institute groups already exist in most chief centres.

The Institute being a company limited by guarantee, it is necessary for intending members to fill up the form of application (enclosed in this copy) and send it to the Institute's office together with their subscription. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be forwarded if desired.

Further information can be obtained on application to The British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

THE CARE OF PROJECTORS AND FILMS

The last of five articles by H. D. WALEY on the elements of sub-standard projection.

LUBRICATION

Like all mechanisms which function at a high speed, projectors need regular lubrication. It is customary to mark with a spot of red paint the various oilholes which feed oil to the bearings. The frequent use of a small quantity of oil is preferable to a liberal application at long intervals, because over-profuse lubrication is likely to lead to oil leaking into the gate and fouling the film. Some manufacturers provide a small supply of oil with the original outfit, but there is no objection to any high-grade light oil being used. That, for example, supplied for use with sewing machines will answer the purpose and is easily procurable. Cheap oil or thick oil might end by clogging the bearings. With projectors which employ a cross movement, a tin of somewhat heavier oil for lubricating the cross is generally supplied.

CLEANING THE GATE

The fact that the "gate" of the projector holds the film in focus on the screen necessarily results in any pieces of loose fluff or dust which may attach themselves to the edge of the gate aperture appearing on the screen with most unwelcome clearness (and, of course, a magnification of 100 odd diameters). The presence of grit in the gate will inevitably result in scratched film.

It is therefore essential that the gate should be frequently wiped clean with a bit of rag or a small stiffish brush. It is possible, however, that from time to time small lumps of film-emulsion may form hard clots on the runners at the sides of the gate. These lumps lead to unsteadiness of the picture and to extra strain on the mechanism and on the perforations of the film. They must therefore be removed at the earliest convenient moment, but it is essential that no hard metal edge should be used for this purpose, as it would scratch the smooth surface of the gate-runners and increase their tendency to pick up the emulsion.

CLEANING THE LENSES

Both the projection lens and the condensing lenses require periodical cleaning. A dirty condensing lens leads to loss of light and a dirty projection lens to loss both of light and definition. The condensing lenses are not, of course, finished with a high degree of precision and no special precautions are necessary in cleaning them. The projection lenses, on the other hand, are not only finished within very minute limits of error but are also composed of soft glass which is easily scratched if it is roughly wiped over while dust is still on it. The lens should be first freed from dust with a camel-hair brush then freed from grease with a well-washed linen rag slightly damped with methylated spirit or some other suitable solvent and finished by polishing with chamois leather. Grease on the lens is better prevented than cured. Care should be taken when the fingers are near the lens (in focusing, for example).

ADJUSTING THE LAMP AND THE MIRROR

The light output of a projector depends to a very large extent on the accuracy with which the filament of the lamp is centred to the whole optical system. The majority of

projection lamps used on sub-standard projectors possess a flanged base instead of a screw base, and thus cannot be placed considerably out of their true position. Nevertheless, small errors still occur and every well-designed projector has provision for lamp-adjustment in all directions. The exact position of the filament with regard to the optical system may be checked by removing the projection lens and holding a sheet of paper a few inches in front of the projector. An image of the filament will be thrown on the paper in a circle of light and the position of the filament-image in the circle corresponds with the position of the filament in the optical system. When the image appears truly central then the lamp is properly placed.

The filaments of projection lamps are not all arranged in the same manner, some are arranged in a single plane with spaces between the coils while others are festooned to and fro so that the coils occupy two or even three planes. When the lamp-filament is of the monoplane type the mirror behind the lamp plays an important part in the efficiency of the system by casting an image of the filaments into the gaps left between the filaments themselves. The mirror naturally requires careful adjustment if it is to be used to full advantage. This adjustment may be carried out after removal of the projection lens in the same way in which the adjustment of the lamp-position is controlled.

SOUND PROJECTORS

Owing to variations in the detail of design, it is difficult to lay down general rules for the care of those parts which belong to sound-projectors only. In this matter, the instruction book of each make is the only reliable guide. In general, it may be said that the addition of sound does not add substantially to the routine of upkeep outlined for silent projectors. The most frequent necessity is the dusting out of the aperture through which the light beam enters the photo-cell. This is best performed with a camel-hair brush.

CARE OF THE FILM

The two chief enemies of film are dust and grease. Dust which has gathered on a film while at rest will grind into its surface when it is projected and leave disfiguring scratches. Film will certainly gather dust if it is trailed on the floor and will probably do so if left lying for long on a table. Film reels should be restored promptly to their tins after use. The film may become greasy either from fingermarks or from lubricating oil which has spread into the film-track of the projector. The film should be handled by its edges only and a piece of clean rag should be kept handy.

The cellulose acetate base from which sub-standard film is manufactured is liable to become brittle unless its moisture content is kept replenished. It is therefore desirable to put a piece of blotting paper in each tin of film and damp it from time to time with a few drops either of water or of some special preparation, of which several varieties are sold. Moreover, if it is desired to prolong the life of a particular piece of film to the utmost possible its freedom both from scratches and strained perforations may be considerably extended by sending it to be professionally treated by a process which hardens both base and gelatine through the chemical action of a gas.

THE CARE OF LOOPED FILMS

The contribution to teaching methods of looped films and the construction of simple loop-absorbers for a projector were discussed by Max Kaufmann in an article in *SIGHT AND SOUND*, Vol. 5, No. 20. In this article H. E. DANCE, M.Eng., gives some practical hints from experience on the care and handling of looped films so as to ensure the maximum period of use for them.

THE USE of looped films for the continuous study of cyclical action or for the repeated study of non-cyclical action is growing rapidly. Such films, because of their limited content, enable attention to be concentrated and they give the observer time to study the action in detail. They are used in scientific observation, particularly in motion study; and in teaching they provide action pictures which stand between the simple lantern slide and the continuous short film. The chief merit of the looped film is its ability to run continuously without interruption.

Economy of film material is an important property of the loop, but if the full economy is to be realised it is essential that the film be properly handled.

In the projector the run of the loop is exactly the same as when the film runs from a spool, but the free end of the loop must be accommodated by a device which allows it to run easily and to enter the "lead on" and "lead off" sprockets accurately, *i.e.*, some form of loop-carrying device must be employed. If a properly designed device is not used the running life of the film will inevitably be diminished. It is possible to run medium sized loops merely by supporting them by hand, but there is risk of accident which might well ruin the film. Loops should always be set up with considerable slack on the loop-absorber—16 mm. film will look after itself in a surprising manner if allowed reasonable freedom. A tightly threaded film soon damages itself.

The proper storing of loops is almost as important as good handling. The formation of sharp folds will make it impossible to run the film, and even very sharp bends will cause bad running. For this reason loops should not be stored in round boxes, as shown in Fig. 1, in which a sharp bend as at "A" cannot be avoided. A square box (Fig. 2) leaves more room for the bend but a better arrangement is to wind the loop into a double coil as shown in Fig. 3. In this arrangement it is convenient to wind the loop so that any identifying marks appear at "B."

If the box is deep enough to allow of it, the looped end of the film should be lifted, as shown in Fig. 4, so that it passes over the coil and allows a much larger loop to be formed. (In Fig. 4 the loop end has been thickened so that it can be followed more easily). The use of boxes deep

enough to allow this to be done is strongly recommended. It is obvious that if the box were deep enough the two coils, shown side by side in Fig. 4, could be placed one above the other, and coils of about twice the diameter shown could be accommodated in the same box; this arrangement is probably the best.

Very short loops can be accommodated without sharp bends in the manner shown in Fig. 5. This method of folding looks simple, but a little practice is necessary if it is to be done quickly. The loop is held at two points, about one-third of the total length apart, and both parts are twisted in the same direction. The loop suddenly snaps into the triple coil. A deep box is necessary, as one turn passes over the others.

It is most important to coil loops so that the joins do not occur at the exposed bends; the best position for the join is between turns of the main coil. Joins which are left exposed tend to "cockle" in time.

The threading of any film, whether spooled or looped, should always be checked before the projector is started, but this must be specially emphasised in the case of loops, for the effects of carelessness in threading are accumulated on a short length of stock. In spooled films such damage is concentrated on the end where it does little harm.

As the chief merit of the looped film is its limitation of content for the purpose of close study it is obvious that the loop should not be overlong. A 15-ft. loop, giving a running time of 37 seconds, should not be exceeded unless there is exceptional reason for so doing. On the other hand, very short loops should be avoided because for the same showing time they must pass through the projector much more frequently than a long loop. It is suggested that loops should initially be not less than 9 ft. unless the circumstances are exceptional.

Loops which are truly cyclical should contain a whole number of cycles, and in some cases a 9-ft. loop will carry 2, 3, 4 or even many more complete cycles of action. If such a loop is damaged and several frames have to be removed it will usually be better to cut out a complete cycle so as to avoid jump in the repaired film. Indeed, if truly cyclical action is contained on a continuous film the same considerations should lead one to remove a complete cycle rather than leave a "jump."

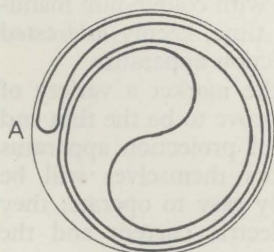


FIG. 1.

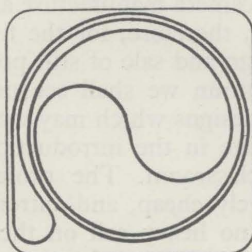


FIG. 2.

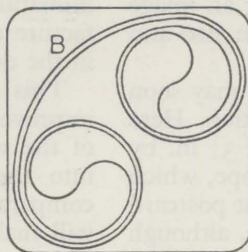


FIG. 3.

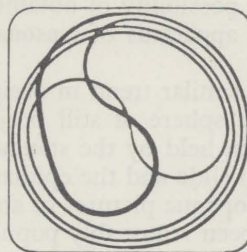


FIG. 4.

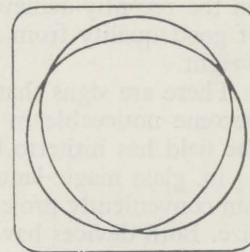


FIG. 5.

DAYLIGHT PROJECTION IN CLASSROOMS

MANY TEACHERS who use the film for teaching assume that complete darkness is necessary for effective projection—complete darkness is not in fact necessary, and from the teaching point of view it is objectionable because it prevents the teacher from seeing the pupils and often makes reasonably good ventilation impossible to attain.

To secure the best daylight projection, three things are necessary :—

1. A film which will transmit a high proportion of the light available;
2. A projector which gives an ample supply of light; and
3. Skilful use in the classroom by the teacher.

Probably the last is the most important, because the teacher has to apply his skill in every new situation. With the best projectors and film it is possible on dull winter days to project in daylight without using any blinds at all; as the days become brighter more precautions have to be taken, but it should always be possible even on the brightest summer days to admit *some* daylight—enough to enable the teacher to see his class.

To secure daylight projection the picture must be as bright as possible. Often a picture bigger than necessary is used. In most classrooms a picture 24 inches wide is ample, and indeed this size is consistent with many of the maps and diagrams which are employed for other illustration. A picture two feet wide will be *four times* as bright as one four feet wide, and *nine times* as bright as one six feet wide. There is a temptation to use a picture much larger than is really necessary, but it is not worth using a very large picture if it must be paid for by completely blacking out the windows.

On bright days, or in rooms with very many windows, it will usually be necessary to shield the screen from some of the light even when the brightest picture has been obtained. Two points need care here :—

1. A little experiment will show that some of the windows are much more effective than others in throwing light on to the screen. These should be covered first and it may then be found unnecessary to cover the others.
2. Some windows which do not admit light to the screen might cause glare to the observers. These should be covered so that glare is avoided.

If the room is wide it will generally be better to use a white (non-directional) screen, if it is narrow a “silver” (directional) screen will most likely give the best effect.

If there is some freedom in selecting the room for projection, it is better to take a room which has a north aspect if possible. In nearly all schools some rooms have less natural light than others, and of course those should be used for projection. The room which has windows on one side wall and on the back wall is most difficult to deal with, as also is the room with windows on both side walls and back wall; such rooms should be avoided.

For projection to large groups, where it is necessary to use a large picture, daylight projection is not practical, and it is necessary to black out completely. However, films projected to large groups of pupils are not usually films of a “classroom” type and there is less need for the teacher to be in intimate contact with the observers. Moreover in large halls, the ventilating difficulties resulting from the complete darkening of the windows are less severe—though still present.

FILM SLIDE PROJECTION

DURING RECENT years it has been found possible to effect considerable improvements in the fineness of emulsion-grain and the intensity of filament lamps. This has made it theoretically possible to reduce in size the original picture in the projection apparatus without reducing in quality the image thrown on the screen.

In the case of the moving picture, this possibility has been put into practice by the introduction on the one hand of a narrower film—the 8 mm.—and on the other by the extended use of 16 mm. film in fields which were previously beyond its scope, and the supersession of 35 mm. film by 16 mm. film in the classroom and lecture-hall. Such use as is now made of films in the classroom, undoubtedly depends on the recently achieved possibility of obtaining an image of good quality from an apparatus of reasonable size and weight.

There are signs that a similar trend in design may soon become noticeable in the sphere of still projection. Here the field has hitherto been held by the standard 3½ in. by 3¼ in. glass magic-lantern slide and the epidiascope, which can conveniently project opaque pictures of about postcard size. Both devices have been reasonably popular, although perhaps more popular in the lecture hall than in the class-

room. In the case of the magic-lantern, the slides are heavy breakable, and expensive. In the case of the epidiascope, the instrument itself is heavy and expensive.

A variety of causes are at the moment combining to bring into popularity the sub-standard magic lantern, which takes either glass-slides 2 in. by 2 in. or strips of film on which single pictures are printed, which may be either Leica-size (36 mm. by 24 mm.) or the slightly larger vest-pocket film size (40 mm. by 30 mm.). A principal cause leading design in this direction is the introduction of single-copy colour film of various types, which can only be viewed in this way. These colour films are mostly marketed in miniature-camera size and the large firms concerned with miniature-camera manufacture and with colour-film manufacture are, therefore, for the first time, keenly interested in the design and sale of still projection apparatus.

This autumn we shall see on the market a variety of improved designs which may well prove to be the thin end of the wedge in the introduction of projection apparatus into the classroom. The projectors themselves will be comparatively cheap, and extremely easy to operate; they will make no heavy call on the electric current and the slides will be cheap to buy, easy to store, and, moreover,

easy to produce by amateur means. The introduction of still projection into the classroom would not be a setback for the cause of the moving picture. On the other hand, it would lead the teacher on to tackling the fundamental problems of projection—the placing of the screen and the projector, and the darkening or semi-darkening of the room, the cleaning of the lenses and the centring of lights, for example, without plunging him at once into the complications inherent in cinema projection.

The fundamental distinction is, in fact, between the use of full-sized illustrative materials with their inevitable weight and bulk—maps, pictures, apparatus and so forth—and the use of full-sized images of these things, weightless and bulkless, derived from miniature originals; between non-projection, in fact, and projection, not between still projection and moving projection. Considerations of cost and convenience all favour projection if illustrative material is to be used to the full as an aid to learning.

The problem which confronts the schools is, in fact, similar to the problem which confronts the libraries. The libraries are finding that they are faced with being swamped under their own accumulation of books and papers. Plans are being matured for the storage of library material in miniature-negative form with a view to subsequent enlargement for reading purposes by means of suitable projection apparatus. The schools, too, if they did full justice to the possibilities of the fully-illustrated lesson, would be swamped under the bulk of their maps, diagrams, and pictures.

It is in this matter that projection can, and should, come to the rescue. The dramatic potentialities of projection have perhaps rather distracted attention from its space-saving possibilities. It may be argued, of course, that film-slide projectors are superfluous because most 16 mm. moving-picture projectors will show stills. It has, however, to be borne in mind that a 16 mm. "frame" has less than an eighth of the area of the Leica-size frame and, therefore, proportionally less good detail and—even more fatal—where semi-daylight showing is concerned, proportionally less intense lighting.

The art of projection has not yet reached the point where a single 16 mm. frame, though it may be useful for explanatory purposes in relation to the film of which it is a part, is an adequate substitute for a lantern slide. Even a single 35 mm. frame is inadequate in size for still projection purposes, paradoxical though this appears when we remember that it suffices for picture-theatre projection of moving pictures. This fact has no doubt had an effect in holding back the use of film-slides hitherto, as much of the older apparatus on the market caters for the single 35 mm. frame only. But a Leica-size frame is, where classroom projection is concerned, perfectly adequate.

A list of film-slide projectors and libraries will be published in the next number of *SIGHT AND SOUND*. This list is being held over owing to the large number of film-slide projectors completed, or nearing completion, in design, but not yet released on to the market. H. D. W.

TECHNICAL NOTES

SAFETY FILM DEMONSTRATION

On Monday, 10th May, the British Sub-standard Cinematograph Association carried out a demonstration, at Dorland Hall, which illustrated in a practical manner the resistance to fire displayed by the various makes of Cellulose Acetate Safety Film Base, the material out of which all sub-standard films are manufactured. The first tests were made upon two-foot lengths of film suspended first horizontally and then vertically. In both cases, a lighted match was held to the film which was ignited with difficulty and burned more slowly than similarly-sized strips of newspaper. A test was then made on an open tangle of film some yards long. This was of course the most stringent test, but the film passed it well, as combustion died down before the whole length of film had been consumed. Finally, a piece of film was intentionally scorched in the gate of a projector and it was shown that although the film blistered it did not catch fire in these circumstances. Representatives of Local Education Authorities, Local Licensing Authorities, and the British Film Institute attended the demonstration.

AMATEUR DOCUMENTARY FILM PANEL

At the invitation of the Royal Photographic Society, the British Film Institute has joined with the Society in forming a Panel to promote the production, by amateurs, of films serving a social purpose. The Panel will operate principally as a clearing-house for information regarding, on the one hand, the requirements of public service institu-

tions of various sorts which could make use of amateur films in their work and, on the other hand, the resources of amateurs willing to undertake this kind of work. It is felt that contact between these two interests has hitherto been more or less a matter of coincidence and that the organisation of this contact should give an impetus to the production of amateur documentary films. The scheme will be run in close association with the Royal Photographic Society's Federation of Amateur Film Societies, and also with the British Amateur Services Club, recently founded by Mr. Robert Flaherty and Mr. John Grierson, but it will be open to all amateur workers to seek enrolment on the Panel's list. Communications should be addressed to The Secretary, R.P.S.-B.F.I. Amateur Documentary Film Panel, The British Film Institute, 4 Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

DITMAR DUO PROJECTORS

These projectors are made in three models representing every possible dual combination of the three substandard sizes—8 mm., 9.5 mm., and 16 mm. They represent an ingenious and largely successful attempt to eliminate an always unwelcome feature of dual purpose machines—a plethora of detachable parts. The main basis of the design is the adoption of two separate, side-by-side gates. This enables top and bottom sprockets of two varieties to be carried on the machine simultaneously, while the lens swings across on a pivot and the lamp slides across. A pre-set clutch causes one or other of the two intermittent systems

to be driven. The machine is quiet running, and has ample light-output for a large classroom or small hall when a 500-watt lamp is used. It is also possible to use 250-watt lamps or 750-watt lamps. The optical system is unusual in design in that the filament-image is brought to a focus in the plane of the film. Normally, of course, such a practice would result in a filament-image appearing on the screen, but this is avoided by blurring the filament-image by the use of a diffusing screen. This system is ingenious but involves one drawback—the centring of the lamp filament must be done by trial and error, since it cannot be accomplished by the usual method of throwing a filament image on the screen.

AN EARLY SUB-STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Through the generosity of Mr. Ronald Fairfoull, the British Film Institute has added to its collection of historical apparatus a "Biokam" combined camera, projector and printer for 17.5 mm. film centrally perforated. This equipment was manufactured by Birt Acres and sold by the Warwick Trading Co. round about the year 1900. Its most characteristic features arise from the fact that it has no take-up, the film simply pushing itself into a light-proof box which forms the body of the camera. Such an arrangement naturally imposes severe limitations on the length of film exposed between visits to the dark-room, but the capacity of the box is doubled by the ingenious idea of dividing it with a lateral partition and making its two ends, on to which the film-movement and lens assembly were clamped, identical. The cameraman thus first clamped the business portion of his camera on to one end, and let one reel push itself into one half of his central camera-box, and then clamped it on to the other end, which brought the leading end of his film opposite an aperture leading into the other half of the camera-box. For projection, a special

assembly similar to, but not identical with, the camera-assembly was advertised to screw into the lens flange of any existing lantern. The camera sold at £6. 6s. and the projector at £4. 4s. They were fitted with Voigtlander lenses and the workmanship throughout is of high quality.

R.P.S. AWARDS FOR KINEMATOGRAPHERS

Under the Articles of Association of the Royal Photographic Society, Associateships are awarded to those members who satisfy the Council of their ability in one or other of the branches of photography, or the arts and sciences relating thereto; Fellowships are granted to those Associates who possess distinguished ability and originality.

While realising the difficulty of assigning individual credit to those engaged professionally in motion picture production, the Committee of the Kinematograph Section of the Society has carefully considered how technical responsibility in this field may be recognised by the award of the Associateship and Fellowship; their recommendations to the Council have been approved.

Accordingly, consideration can now be given to applications for the Associateship and Fellowship, based upon contributions made to outstanding productions by the responsible technicians in the various departments—camera, sound, editing, art, direction, laboratory, projection, etc.

Two points which may be emphasised are the very high standard which is required of applicants for the Fellowship, the basis of the qualifications being creative work; and that nothing in these recommendations prevents the Fellowship or Associateship being awarded on grounds of individual work or abilities, the extended qualifications being designed to cover cases where the applicant's sole or principal qualifications are his share in the corporate production of motion pictures.

TECHNICAL ARTICLES OF THE QUARTER

The periodicals containing these articles are available for readers of SIGHT AND SOUND at the British Institute's Technical Offices at 5 Denmark Street, London, W.C.1

HISTORICAL

A Review of the Quest for Constant Speed; E. W. Kellogg (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, April).

PHOTOGRAPHY

The Effect of Aberrations upon Image Quality; W. B. Rayton and A. A. Cook (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, April).

Soft X-Ray Pictures of Small Biological Specimens; H. F. Sherwood (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, June).

How to Use Kodachrome Indoors (*Movie Makers*, May, June).

Polarising Light; Dr. Walter Clark (*Movie Makers*, May, June).

Exposing Kodachrome Successfully; J. F. Holden (*Movie Makers*, May).

Fakes that Work; Earl Theisen (*Movie Makers*, June).

Filming Operations; William M. Nelson (*Movie Makers*, June).

PROJECTION

Neue Sicherheitsvorschriften für Lichtspieltheater; Walter Gunther (*Filmtechnik*, May).

MANUFACTURE AND PROCESSING

Manufacture of Motion Picture Film; E. K. Carver (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, June).

Dimensions of the Picture Image in 16mm. Reduction Printing; G. Friedl Jr. (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, June).

Zum Theme Negativentwicklung; Herbert Engel (*Filmtechnik*, June).

SOUND RECORDING

Materials for Disc-recording; A. C. Keller (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, April).

Recent Developments in Magnetic Sound-recording; S. J. Begum (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, May).

A Single-Channel Recording System; H. I. Reiskind (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, May).

The R.C.A. Sound-recording System; M. C. Batsel and E. W. Kellogg (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, May).

Microphone Mixers; M. Rettinger (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, June).

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Das Einmaleins des Rechnens in Dezibel, Phon und Neper; Paul Hatschek (*Filmtechnik*, June).

COLOUR

The Physics and Technology of the Berthon-Siemens Process; E. Gretener (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, May).

STEREOSCOPY

Weg Zum Plastischen Film (*Filmtechnik*, April).

Der Raumfilm nach Etbauer (*Filmtechnik*, June).

TELEVISION

Iconoscopes and Kinescopes in Television; V. K. Zworykin (*S.M.P.E. Journal*, May).

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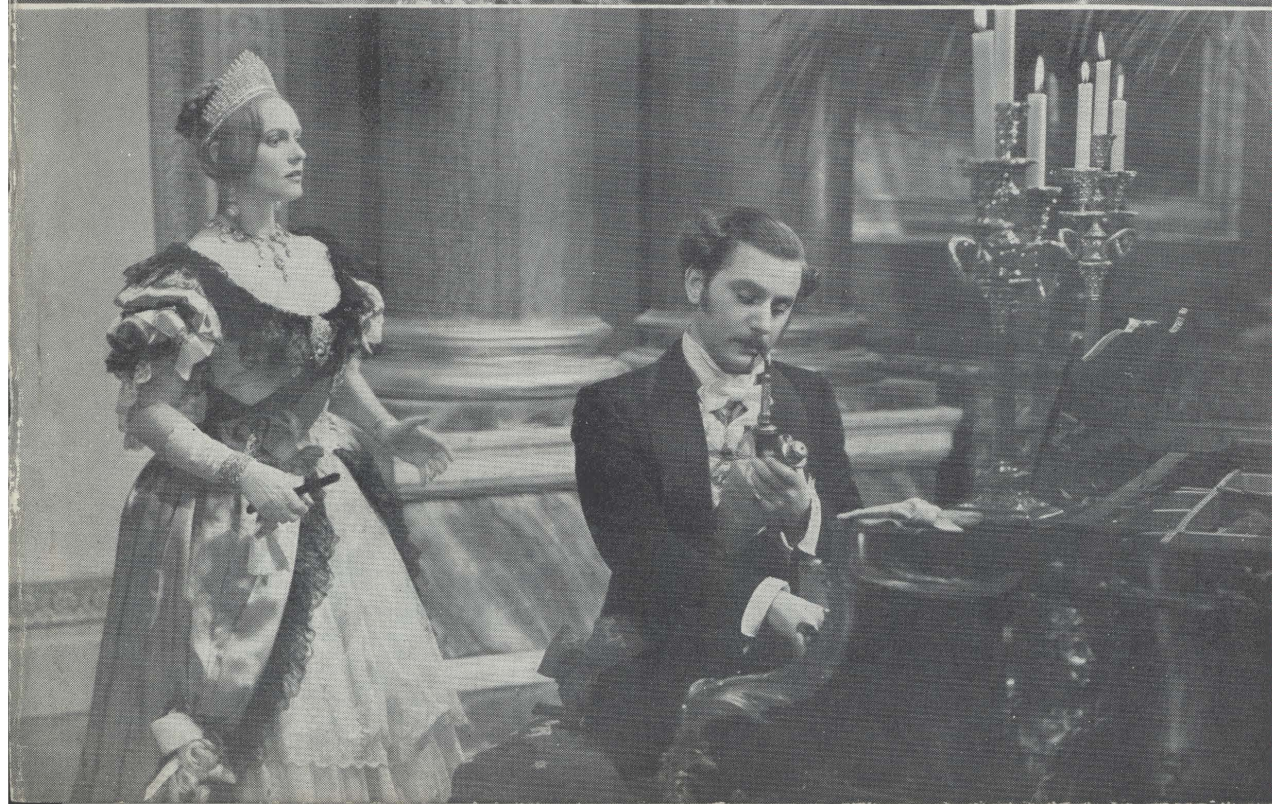
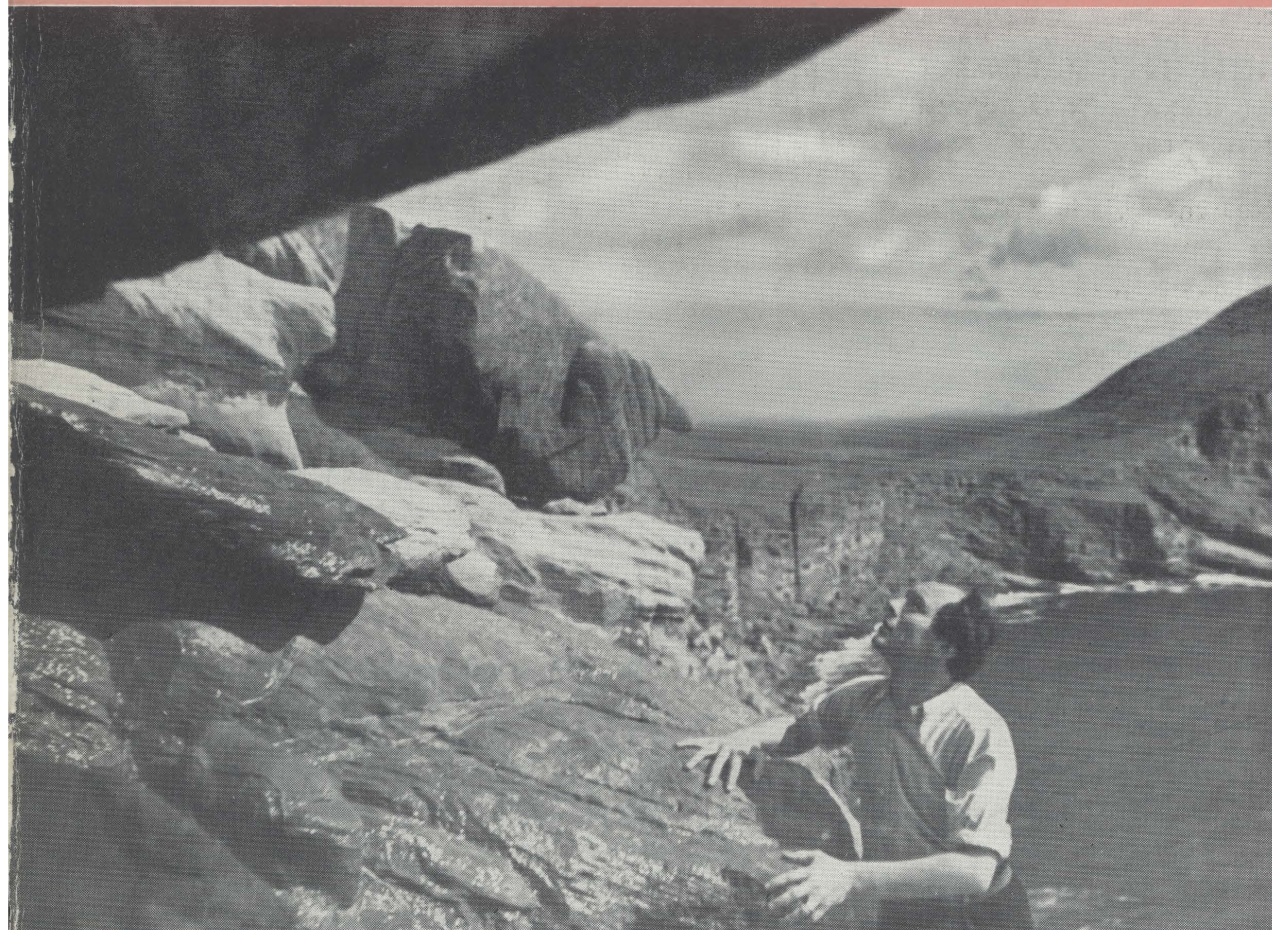
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CONTRIBUTORS

Andrew Buchanan

F. Spencer Chapman

H. Forsyth Hardy

Marie Seton

J. S. Fairfax Jones

Arthur Vesselo

Alan Page

Thomas Baird

Ernest Dyer

J. B. Holmes

Catherine Fletcher

Alexander Mackay

F. Wilkinson

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